THE SERMONS OF DR. J. SWIFT,

DEAN OF ST. PATRICK'S, DUBLIN.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED

THE AUTHOR'S LIFE:

TOGETHER WITH HIS

PRAYER FOR STELLA,

HIS

THOUGHTS

ON, AND

PROJECT

FOR THE

ADVANCEMENT OF RELIGION.

VOL. II.

LONDON:
Sold by R. DAMPIER, J. THOMPSON, W. MANSON, T. DAVIDSON, and P. WATSON.

BRITISH MUSEUM

CONTENTS

OF THE

SECOND VOLUME.

SERMON VII.

On the CAUSES of the Wretched Condition of *Ireland.*

That there be no complaining in our ſtreets. Happy is the people that is in ſuch a caſe. PSALM cxliv. Part of the 13th and 14th Ver.

SERMON VIII.

On ſleeping in Church.

And there ſat in a window a certain young man named Eutychus, *being fallen into a deep ſleep; and while* Paul *was long preaching, he ſunk down with ſleep, and fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead.* ACTS, chap. xx. ver. 9.

SERMON IX.

Upon the Martyrdom of K CHARLES I.

SIMEON *and* LEVI *are brethren; inſtruments of cruelty are in their habitations.*

O my ſoul, come not thou into their ſecret; unto their aſſembly, mine honour, be not thou united: for in their anger they ſlew a man, and in their ſelf-will they digged down a wall.

Curſed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel. I will divide them in JACOB, *and ſcatter them in* ISRAEL. GEN. xlix. 5, 6, 7.

SERMON X.

Doing Good: On the Occaſion of Wood's project.

As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men. GALATIANS vi. 10.

SERMON XI.

On the Excellence of Chriſtianity, in oppoſition to Heathen-Philoſophy.

The wiſdom of this world is fooliſhneſs with GOD. 1 COR. iii. 19.

SERMON VII.

ON THE

CAUSES

OF THE

Wretched Condition of *Ireland.*

SERMON VII.

PSALM cxliv. Part of the 13th and 14th Ver.

That there be no complaining in our ſtreets. Happy is the people that is in ſuch a caſe.

IT is a very melancholy reflection, that ſuch a country as ours, which is capable of producing all things neceſſary, and moſt things convenient for life, ſufficient for the ſupport of four times the number of its inhabitants, ſhould yet lie under the heavieſt load of miſery and want, our ſtreets crowded with beggars, ſo many of our lower ſort of

tradeſmen, labourers, and artificers not able to find cloaths and food for their families.

I THINK it may therefore be of ſome uſe to lay before you the chief cauſes of this wretched condition we are in, and then it will be eaſier to aſſign what remedies are in our power towards removing, at leaſt, ſome part of theſe evils.

FOR it is ever to be lamented, that we lie under many diſadvantages, not by our own faults, which are peculiar to ourſelves, and which no other nation under heaven hath any reaſon to complain of.

I SHALL, therefore, firſt mention ſome cauſes of our miſeries, which I doubt are not to be remedied, until

til God ſhall put it in the hearts of thoſe who are ſtronger to allow us the common rights and privileges of brethren, fellow-ſubjects, and even of mankind.

THE firſt cauſe of our miſery is the intolerable hardſhips we lie under in every branch of our trade, by which we are become as hewers of wood, and drawers of water, to our rigorous neighbours.

THE ſecond cauſe of our miſerable ſtate is the folly, the vanity, and ingratitude of thoſe vaſt numbers, who think themſelves too good to live in the country which gave them birth, and ſtill gives them bread; and rather chooſe to paſs their days, and conſume their wealth, and draw out the very vitals of their mother

kingdom, among thoſe who heartily deſpiſe them.

THESE I have but lightly touched on, becauſe I fear they are not to be redreſſed, and, beſides, I am very ſenſible how ready ſome people are to take offence at the honeſt truth; and, for that reaſon, I ſhall omit ſeveral other grievances, under which we are long likely to groan.

I SHALL therefore go on to relate ſome other cauſes of this nation's poverty, by which, if they continue much longer, it muſt infallibly ſink to utter ruin.

THE firſt is, that monſtrous pride and vanity in both ſexes, eſpecially the weaker ſex, who, in the midſt of poverty, are ſuffered to run into all

all-kind of expence and extravagance in dreſs, and particularly priding themſelves to wear nothing but what cometh from abroad, diſdaining the growth or manufacture of their own country, in thoſe articles where they can be better ſerved at home with half the expence; and this is grown to ſuch a height, that they will carry the whole yearly rent of a good eſtate at once on their body. And, as there is in that ſex a ſpirit of envy, by which they cannot endure to ſee others in a better habit than themſelves, ſo thoſe, whoſe fortunes can hardly ſupport their families in the neceſſaries of life, will needs vie with the richeſt and greateſt among us, to the ruin of themſelves and their poſterity.

NEITHER are the men leſs guilty

of this pernicious folly, who, in imitation of a gaudineſs and foppery of dreſs, introduced of late years into our neighbouring kingdom, (as fools are apt to imitate only the defects of their betters) cannot find materials in their own country worthy to adorn their bodies of clay, while their minds are naked of every valuable quality.

THUS our tradeſmen and ſhopkeepers, who deal in home-goods, are left in a ſtarving condition, and only thoſe encouraged who ruin the kingdom by importing among us foreign vanities.

ANOTHER cauſe of our low condition is our great luxury, the chief ſupport of which is the materials of it brought to the nation in exchange for

for the few valuable things left us, whereby ſo many thouſand families want the very neceſſaries of life.

Thirdly, In moſt parts of this kingdom the natives are from their infancy ſo given up to idleneſs and ſloth, that they often chuſe to beg or ſteal, rather than ſupport themſelves with their own labour; they marry without the leaſt view or thought of being able to make any proviſion for their families; and whereas, in all induſtrious nations, children are looked on as a help to their parents, with us, for want of being early trained to work, they are an intolerable burden at home, and a grievous charge upon the publick, as appeareth from the vaſt number of ragged and naked children in town and country, led about

by ſtrolling women, trained up in ignorance and all manner of vice.

Laſtly, A GREAT cauſe of this nation's miſery, is that *Ægyptian* bondage of cruel, oppreſſing, covetous landlords, expecting that all who live under them ſhould make bricks without ſtraw, who grieve and envy when they ſee a tenant of their own in a whole coat, or able to afford one comfortable meal in a month, by which the ſpirits of the people are broken, and made for ſlavery; the farmers and cottagers, almoſt through the whole kingdom, being to all intents and purpoſes as real beggars as any of thoſe to whom we give our charity in the ſtreets. And theſe cruel landlords are every day unpeopling their kingdom, by forbidding their miſerable tenants

to

to till the earth, againſt common reaſon and juſtice, and contrary to the practice and prudence of all other nations, by which numberleſs families have been forced either to leave the kingdom, or ſtrole about, and increaſe the number of our thieves and beggars.

SUCH, and much worſe, is our condition at preſent, if I had leiſure or liberty to lay it before you; and, therefore, the next thing which might be conſidered is, whether there may be any probable remedy found, at the leaſt againſt ſome part of theſe evils; for moſt of them are wholly deſperate.

BUT this being too large a ſubject to be now handled, and the intent of my diſcourſe confining me to give

ſome directions concerning the poor of this city, I ſhall keep myſelf within thoſe limits. It is indeed in the power of the law-givers to found a ſchool in every pariſh of the kingdom, for teaching the meaner and poorer ſort of children to ſpeak and read the *Engliſh* tongue, and to provide a reaſonable maintenance for the teachers. This would, in time, aboliſh that part of barbarity and ignorance, for which our natives are ſo deſpiſed by all foreigners; this would bring them to think and act according to the rules of reaſon, by which a ſpirit of induſtry, and thrift, and honeſty would be introduced among them. And, indeed, conſidering how ſmall a tax would ſuffice for ſuch a work, it is a publick ſcandal that ſuch a thing ſhould never

ver have been endeavoured, or, perhaps, ſo much as thought on.

To ſupply the want of ſuch a law, ſeveral pious perſons, in many parts of this kingdom, have been prevailed on, by the great endeavours and good example ſet them by the clergy, to erect charity ſchools in ſeveral pariſhes, to which very often the richeſt pariſhioners contribute the leaſt. In theſe ſchools, children are, or ought to be, trained up to read and write, and caſt accounts; and theſe children ſhould, if poſſible, be of honeſt parents, gone to decay through age, ſickneſs, or other unavoidable calamity, by the hand of God; not the brood of wicked ſtrollers; for it is by no means reaſonable, that the charity of well-inclined people ſhould be applied to encourage

courage the lewdneſs of thoſe profligate, abandoned women, who crowd our ſtreets with their borrowed or ſpurious iſſue.

In thoſe hoſpitals which have good foundations and rents to ſupport them, whereof, to the ſcandal of Chriſtianity, there are very few in this kingdom; I ſay, in ſuch hoſpitals, the children maintained ought to be only of decayed citizens, and freemen, and be bred up to good trades. But in theſe ſmall pariſh charity ſchools which have no ſupport, but the caſual good will of charitable people, I do altogether diſapprove the cuſtom of putting the children 'prentice, except to the very meaneſt trades; otherwiſe the poor honeſt citizen who is juſt able to bring up his child, and pay a

ſmall

ſmall ſum of money with him to a good maſter, is wholly defeated, and the baſtard iſſue, perhaps, of ſome beggar preferred before him. And hence we come to be ſo over-ſtocked with 'prentices and journeymen, more than our diſcouraged country can employ; and, I fear, the greateſt part of our thieves, pickpockets, and other vagabonds are of this number.

THEREFORE, in order to make theſe pariſh charity ſchools of great and univerſal uſe, I agree with the opinion of many wiſe perſons, that a new turn ſhould be given to this whole matter.

I THINK there is no complaint more juſt than what we find in almoſt every family, of the folly and ignorance,

ignorance, the fraud and knavery, the idleneſs and viciouſneſs, the waſteful ſquandering temper of ſervants, who are, indeed, become one of the many publick grievances of the kingdom; whereof, I believe, there are few maſters that now hear me who are not convinced by their own experience. And I am very confident, that more families, of all degrees, have been ruined by the corruptions of ſervants, than by all other cauſes put together. Neither is this to be wondered at, when we conſider from what nurſeries ſo many of them are received into our houſes. The firſt is the tribe of wicked boys, wherewith moſt corners of this town are peſtered, who haunt publick doors. Theſe, having been born of beggars, and bred to pilfer as ſoon as they can go or

ſpeak,

ſpeak, as years come on, are employed in the loweſt offices to get themſelves bread, are practiſed in all manner of villainy, and when they are grown up, if they are not entertained in a gang of thieves, are forced to ſeek for a ſervice. The other nurſery is the barbarous and defart part of the country, from whence ſuch lads come up hither to ſeek their fortunes, who are bred up from the dunghill in idleneſs, ignorance, lying, and thieving. From theſe two nurſeries, I ſay, a great number of our ſervants come to us, ſufficient to corrupt all the reſt. Thus, the whole race of ſervants in this kingdom have gotten ſo ill a reputation, that ſome perſons from *England*, come over hither into great ſtations, are ſaid to have abſolutely refuſed admitting any ſervant

vant born among us into their families. Neither can they be juſtly blamed; for although it is not impoſſible to find an honeſt native fit for a good ſervice, yet the enquiry is too troubleſome, and the hazard too great for a ſtranger to attempt.

If we conſider the many misfortunes that befal private families, it will be found that ſervants are the cauſes and inſtruments of them all: Are our goods embezzled, waſted and deſtroyed? Is our houſe burnt down to the ground? It is by the ſloth, the drunkenneſs or the villainy of ſervants. Are we robbed and murdered in our beds? It is by confederacy with our ſervants. Are we engaged in quarrels and miſunderſtandings with our neighbours? Theſe were all begun and inflamed by

by the falſe, malicious tongues of our ſervants. Are the ſecrets of our family betrayed, and evil repute ſpread of us? Our ſervants were the authors. Do falſe accuſers riſe up againſt us? (an evil too frequent in this country) they have been tampering with our ſervants. Do our children diſcover folly, malice, pride, cruelty, revenge, undutifulneſs in their words and actions? Are they ſeduced to lewdneſs or ſcandalous marriages? It is all by our ſervants. Nay, the very miſtakes, follies, blunders, and abſurdities of thoſe in our ſervice, are able to ruffle and diſcompoſe the mildeſt nature, and are often of ſuch conſequence, as to put whole families into confuſion.

SINCE therefore not only our domeſtic peace and quiet, and the welfare

fare of our children, but even the very ſafety of our lives, reputations, and fortunes have ſo great a dependence upon the choice of our ſervants, I think it would well become the wiſdom of the nation to make ſome proviſion in ſo important an affair. But, in the mean time, and, perhaps, to better purpoſe, it were to be wiſhed, that the children of both ſexes, entertained in the pariſh charity-ſchools, were bred up in ſuch a manner as would give them a teachable diſpoſition, and qualify them to learn whatever is required in any ſort of ſervice. For inſtance, they ſhould be taught to read and write, to know ſomewhat in caſting accounts, to underſtand the principles of religion, to practiſe cleanlineſs, to get a ſpirit of honeſty, induſtry, and thrift, and be ſeverely puniſhed for

for every neglect in any of theſe particulars. For, it is the misfortune of mankind, that if they are not uſed to be taught in their early childhood, whereby to acquire what I call a teachable diſpoſition, they cannot, without great difficulty, learn the eaſieſt thing in the courſe of their lives, but are always aukward and unhandy; their minds, as well as bodies, for want of early practice, growing ſtiff and unmanageable, as we obſerve in the ſort of gentlemen, who, kept from ſchool by the indulgence of their parents but a few years, are never able to recover the time they have loſt, and grow up in ignorance and all manner of vice, whereof we have too many examples all over the nation. But to return to what I was ſaying: If theſe charity-children were trained

ed up in the manner I mentioned, and then bound apprentices in the families of gentlemen and citizens, (for which a late law giveth great encouragement) being accuſtomed from their firſt entrance to be always learning ſome uſeful thing, would learn, in a month, more than another, without thoſe advantages, can do in a year; and, in the mean time, be very uſeful in a family, as far as their age and ſtrength would allow. And when ſuch children come to years of diſcretion, they will probably be an uſeful example to their fellow-ſervants, at leaſt they will prove a ſtrong check upon the reſt; for, I ſuppoſe every body will allow, that one good, honeſt, diligent ſervant in a houſe may prevent abundance of miſchief in the family.

THESE are the reaſons for which I urge this matter ſo ſtrongly, and I hope thoſe who liſten to me will conſider them.

I SHALL now ſay ſomething about that great number of poor, who, under the name of common beggars, infeſt our ſtreets, and fill our ears with their continual cries, and craving importunity. This I ſhall venture to call an unneceſſary evil, brought upon us for the groſs neglect, and want of proper management, in thoſe whoſe duty it is to prevent it. But before I proceed farther, let me humbly preſume to vindicate the juſtice and mercy of God and his dealings with mankind. Upon this particular he hath not dealt ſo hardly with his creatures as ſome would imagine, when they

ſee

ſee ſo many miſerable objects ready to periſh for want: For it would infallibly be found, upon ſtrict enquiry, that there is hardly one in twenty of thoſe miſerable objects who do not owe their preſent poverty to their own faults, to their preſent ſloth and negligence, to their indiſcreet marriage without the leaſt proſpect of ſupporting a family, to their fooliſh expenſiveneſs, to their drunkenneſs, and other vices, by which they have ſquandered their gettings, and contracted diſeaſes in their old age. And, to ſpeak freely, is it any way reaſonable or juſt, that thoſe who have denied themſelves many lawful ſatisfactions and conveniencies of life, from a principle of conſcience, as well as prudence, that they might not be a burden to the public, ſhould be

charged

charged with ſupporting others, who have brought themſelves to leſs than a morſel of bread by their idleneſs, extravagance, and vice? Yet ſuch, and no other, are for the greateſt number not only in thoſe who beg in our ſtreets, but even of what we call poor decayed houſekeepers, whom we are apt to pity as real objects of charity, and diſtinguiſh them from common beggars, although, in truth, they both owe their undoing to the ſame cauſes; only the former is either too nicely bred to endure walking half naked in the ſtreets, or too proud to own their wants. For the artificer or other tradeſman, who pleadeth he is grown too old to work or look after buſineſs, and therefore expecteth aſſiſtance as a decayed houſekeeper; may we not aſk him, why he did

not take care, in his youth and ſtrength of days, to make ſome proviſion againſt old age, when he ſaw ſo many examples before him of people undone by their idleneſs and vicious extravagance? and to go a little higher; whence cometh it that ſo many citizens and ſhopkeepers, of the moſt creditable trade, who once made a good figure, go to decay by their expenſive pride and vanity, affecting to educate and dreſs their children above their abilities, or the ſtate of life they ought to expect?

However, ſince the beſt of us have too many infirmities to anſwer for, we ought not to be ſevere upon thoſe of others; and therefore, if our brother, through grief, or ſickneſs, or other incapacity, is not in a condition to preſerve his being,

we

we ought to ſupport him to the beſt of our power, without reflecting over ſeriouſly on the cauſes that brought him to his miſery. But in order to this, and to turn our charity into its proper channel, we ought to conſider who and where thoſe objects are, whom it is chiefly incumbent upon us to ſupport.

By the ancient law of this realm, ſtill in force, every pariſh is obliged to maintain its own poor, which although ſome may think to be not very equal, becauſe many pariſhes are very rich, and have few poor among them, and others the contrary; yet, I think, may be juſtly defended: For as to remote country-pariſhes in the deſart part of the kingdom, the neceſſaries of life are there ſo cheap, that the infirm poor may be

provided for with little burden to the inhabitants. But in what I am going to ſay, I ſhall confine myſelf only to this city, where we are over-run not only with our own poor, but with a far greater number from every part of the nation. Now, I ſay, this evil of being encumbered with ſo many foreign beggars, who have not the leaſt title to our charity, and whom it is impoſſible for us to ſupport, may be eaſily remedied, if the government of this city, in conjunction with the clergy and pariſh-officers, would think it worth their care; and I am ſure few things deſerve it better. For, if every pariſh would take a liſt of thoſe begging poor which properly belong to it, and compel each of them to wear a badge, marked and numbered, ſo as to be ſeen and known by all they meet,

meet, and confine them to beg within the limits of their own pariſh, ſeverely puniſhing them when they offend, and driving out all interlopers from other pariſhes, we could then make a computation of their numbers; and the ſtrollers from the country being driven away, the remainder would not be too many for the charity of thoſe who paſs by to maintain; neither would any beggar, although confined to his own pariſh, be hindered from receiving the charity of the whole town; becauſe, in this caſe, thoſe well-diſpoſed perſons who walk the ſtreets, will give their charity to ſuch whom they think proper objects, wherever they meet them, provided they are found in their own pariſhes, and wearing their badges of diſtinction. And, as to thoſe pariſhes which bor-

der upon the ſkirts and ſuburbs of the town, where country-ſtrollers are uſed to harbour themſelves, they muſt be forced to go back to their homes, when they find no body to relieve them, becauſe they want that mark which only gives them licence to beg. Upon this point, it were to be wiſhed, that inferior pariſh-officers had better encouragement given them to perform their duty in driving away all beggars who do not belong to the pariſh, inſtead of conniving at them, as it is ſaid they do for ſome ſmall contribution; for the whole city would ſave much more by ridding themſelves of many hundred beggars, than they would loſe by giving pariſh-officers a reaſonable ſupport.

It ſhould ſeem a ſtrange, unaccountable

countable thing, that thoſe who have probably been reduced to want by riot, lewdneſs, and idleneſs, although they have aſſurance enough to beg alms publicly from all they meet, ſhould yet be too proud to wear the pariſh badge, which would turn ſo much to their own advantage, by ridding them of ſuch great numbers, who now intercept the greateſt part of what belongeth to them: Yet it is certain, that there are very many who publicly declare they will never wear thoſe badges, and many others who either hide or throw them away: But the remedy for this is very ſhort, eaſy, and juſt, by tying them like vagabonds and ſturdy beggars, and forcibly driving them out of the town.

THEREFORE, as ſoon as this ex-

pedient of wearing badges ſhall be put in practice, I do earneſtly exhort all thoſe who hear me, never to give their alms to any public beggar who doth not fully comply with this order, by which our number of poor will be ſo reduced, that it will be much eaſier to provide for the reſt. Our ſhop-doors will be no longer crouded with ſo many thieves and pick pockets, in beggars habits, nor our ſtreets ſo dangerous to thoſe who are forced to walk in the night.

THUS I have, with great freedom, delivered my thoughts upon this ſubject, which ſo earneſtly concerneth us. It is certainly a bad ſcheme, to any chriſtian country, which God hath bleſſed with fruitfulneſs, and where the people enjoy the juſt rights and privileges of mankind, that there

ſhould

ſhould be any beggars at all. But, alas! among us, where the whole nation itſelf is almoſt reduced to beggary by the diſadvantages we lie under, and the hardſhips we are forced to bear; the lazineſs, ignorance, thoughtleſſneſs, ſquandering temper, ſlaviſh nature, and uncleanly manner of living in the poor popiſh natives, together with the cruel oppreſſions of their landlords, who delight to ſee their vaſſals in the duſt; I ſay, that in ſuch a nation, how can we otherways expect than to be over-run with objects of miſery and want? Therefore, there can be no other method to free this city from ſo intolerable a grievance, than by endeavouring, as far as in us lies, that the burden may be more equally divided, by contributing to maintain our own poor, and forcing the

ſtrollers and vagabonds to return to their ſeveral homes in the country, there to ſmite the conſcience of thoſe oppreſſors, who firſt ſtripped them of all their ſubſtance.

I might here, if the time would permit, offer many arguments to perſuade to works of charity; but you hear them ſo often from the pulpit, that I am willing to hope you may not now want them. Beſides, my preſent deſign was only to ſhew where your alms would be beſt beſtowed, to the honour of God, your own eaſe and advantage, the ſervice of your country, and the benefit of the poor. I deſire you will all weigh and conſider what I have ſpoken, and, according to your ſeveral ſtations and abilities, endeavour to put it in practice;

tice; and God give you good ſucceſs, to whom with the Son and Holy Ghoſt, be all honour, *&c.*

The Grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, &c.

SERMON VIII.

ON

SLEEPING in CHURCH.

SERMON VIII.

ACTS, Chap. xx, Ver. 9.

And there ſat in a window a certain young man named Eutychus, *being fallen into a deep ſleep; and while* Paul *was long preaching, he ſunk down with ſleep, and fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead.*

I HAVE choſen theſe words with deſign, if poſſible, to diſturb ſome part in this audience of half an hour's ſleep, for the convenience and exerciſe whereof this place, at this

this ſeaſon of the day, is very much celebrated.

THERE is indeed one mortal diſadvantage to which all preaching is ſubject; that thoſe who, by the wickedneſs of their lives, ſtand in greateſt need, have uſually the ſmalleſt ſhare; for either they are abſent upon the account of idleneſs, or ſpleen, or hatred to religion, or in order to doze away the intemperance of the week; or, if they do come, they are ſure to employ their minds rather any other way, than regarding or attending to the buſineſs of the place.

THE accident which happened to this young man in the text, hath not been ſufficient to diſcourage his ſucceſſors: But, becauſe the preachers

chers now in the world, however they may exceed St. *Paul* in the art of ſetting men to ſleep, do extremely fall ſhort of him in the working of miracles; therefore men are become ſo cautious as to chuſe more ſafe and convenient ſtations and poſtures for taking their repoſe, without hazard of their perſons; and, upon the whole matter, chuſe rather to truſt their deſtruction to a miracle, than their ſafety. However, this being not the only way by which the lukewarm chriſtians and ſcorners of the age diſcover their neglect and contempt of preaching, I ſhall enter expreſsly into conſideration of this matter, and order my diſcourſe in the following method:

Firſt, I ſhall produce ſeveral inſtances to ſhew the great neglect

glect of preaching now among us.

Secondly, I ſhall reckon up ſome of the uſual quarrels men have againſt preaching.

Thirdly, I ſhall ſet forth the great evil of this neglect and contempt of preaching, and diſcover the real cauſes from whence it proceedeth.

Laſtly, I ſhall offer ſome remedies againſt this great and ſpreading evil.

Firſt, I ſhall produce certain inſtances to ſhew the great neglect of preaching now among us.

THESE may be reduced under two

two heads. First, men's abſence from the ſervice of the church; and ſecondly, their miſbehaviour when they are here.

THE firſt inſtance of men's neglect, is in their frequent abſence from the church.

THERE is no excuſe ſo trivial, that will not paſs upon ſome men's conſciences to excuſe their attendance at the public worſhip of God. Some are ſo unfortunate as to be always indiſpoſed on the Lord's day, and think nothing ſo unwholeſome as the air of a church. Others have their affairs ſo odly contrived, as to be always unluckily prevented by buſineſs. With ſome it is a great mark of wit, and deep underſtanding, to ſtay at home on *Sundays*. Others

thers again discover strange fits of lazineſs, that ſeize them, particularly on that day, and confine them to their beds. Others are abſent out of mere contempt of religion. And, laſtly, there are not a few who look upon it as a day of reſt, and therefore claim the privilege of their caſtle, to keep the Sabbath by eating, drinking, and ſleeping, after the toil and labour of the week. Now in all this the worſt circumſtance is, that theſe perſons are ſuch whoſe companies are moſt required, and who ſtand moſt in need of a phyſician.

Secondly, MEN's great neglect and contempt of preaching, appear by their miſbehaviour when at church.

IF the audience were to be rank-

ed

ed under ſeveral heads, according to their behaviour, when the word of God is delivered, how ſmall a number would appear of thoſe who receive it as they ought? How much of the ſeed then ſown would be found to fall by the way ſide, upon ſtony ground, or among thorns? and how little good ground would there be to take it? A preacher cannot look round from the pulpit, without obſerving, that ſome are in a perpetual whiſper, and, by their air and geſture, give occaſion to ſuſpect, that they are in thoſe very minutes defaming their neighbour. Others have their eyes and imagination conſtantly engaged in ſuch a circle of objects, perhaps to gratify the moſt unwarrantable deſires, that they never once attend to the buſineſs of the place; the ſound of the preach-

er's

er's words doth not ſo much as once interrupt them. Some have their minds wandering among idle, worldly, or vicious thoughts. Some lie at catch to ridicule whatever they hear, and with much wit and humour provide a ſtock of laughter, by furniſhing themſelves from the pulpit. But, of all miſbehaviour, none is comparable to that of thoſe who come here to ſleep; opium is not ſo ſtupifying to many perſons as an afternoon ſermon. Perpetual cuſtom hath ſo brought it about, that the words, of whatever preacher, become only a ſort of uniform ſound at a diſtance, than which nothing is more effectual to lull the ſenſes. For, that it is the very ſound of the ſermon which bindeth up their faculties, is manifeſt from hence, becauſe they all awake ſo very

very regularly as ſoon as it ceaſeth, and with much devotion receive the bleſſing, dozed and beſotted with indecencies I am aſhamed to repeat.

I proceed, *Secondly*, to reckon up ſome of the uſual quarrels men have againſt preaching, and to ſhew the unreaſonableneſs of them.

Such unwarrantable demeanour as I have deſcribed, among chriſtians, in the houſe of God, in a ſolemn aſſembly, while their faith and duty are explained and delivered, have put thoſe who are guilty upon inventing ſome excuſes to extenuate their fault: This they do by turning the blame either upon the particular preacher, or upon preaching in general. Firſt, they object againſt the

the particular preacher; his manner, his delivery, his voice, are diſagreeable; his ſtyle and expreſſion are flat and low; ſometimes improper and abſurd; the matter is heavy, trivial and inſipid; ſometimes deſpicable, and perfectly ridiculous; or elſe, on the other ſide, he runs up into unintelligible ſpeculation, empty notions, and abſtracted flights, all clad in words above uſual underſtandings.

SECONDLY, They object againſt preaching in general; it is a perfect road of talk; they know already whatever can be ſaid; they have heard the ſame an hundred times over. They quarrel that preachers do not relieve an old beaten ſubject with wit and invention; and that now the art is loſt of moving men's paſſions

paſſions, ſo common among the antient orators of *Greece* and *Rome*. Theſe, and the like objections, are frequently in the mouths of men who deſpiſe the fooliſhneſs of preaching. But let us examine the reaſonableneſs of them.

THE doctrine delivered by all preachers is the ſame: *So we preach, and ſo ye believe:* But the manner of delivering is ſuited to the ſkill and abilities of each, which differ in preachers juſt as in the reſt of mankind. However, in perſonal diſlikes of a particular preacher, are theſe men ſure they are always in the right? Do they conſider how mixed a thing is every audience, whoſe taſte and judgment differ, perhaps, every day, not only from each other, but themſelves? And how to

calculate a diſcourſe, that ſhall exactly ſuit them all, is beyond the force and reach of human reaſon, knowledge or invention. Wit and eloquence are ſhining qualities, that God hath imparted, in great degrees, to very few, nor any more to be expected, in the generality of any rank among men, than riches and honour. But further: If preaching in general be all old and beaten, and that they are already ſo well acquainted with it, more ſhame and guilt to them who ſo little edify by it. But, theſe men, whoſe ears are ſo delicate as not to endure a plain diſcourſe of religion, who expect a conſtant ſupply of wit and eloquence on a ſubject handled ſo many thouſand times; what will they ſay when we turn the objection upon themſelves, who with all the lewd and prophane

prophane liberty of diſcourſe they take, upon ſo many thouſand ſubjects, are ſo dull as to furniſh nothing but tedious repetitions, and little paultry, nauſeous common-places, ſo vulgar, ſo worn, or ſo obvious, as, upon any other occaſion, but that of advancing vice, would be hooted off the ſtage? Nor, laſtly, are preachers juſtly blamed for neglecting human oratory to move the paſſions, which is not the buſineſs of a chriſtian orator, whoſe office it is only to work upon faith and reaſon. All other eloquence hath been a perfect cheat, to ſtir up men's paſſions againſt truth and juſtice, for the ſervice of a faction, to put falſe colours upon things, and by an amuſement of agreeable words, make the worſe reaſon appear to be the better. This is certainly not to be allowed in

chriſtian eloquence, and, therefore, St. *Paul* took quite the other courſe; he *came not with excellency of words, or enticing ſpeech of men's wiſdom, but in plain evidence of the ſpirit and power.* And perhaps it was for that reaſon the young man *Eutychus*, uſed to the *Grecian* eloquence, grew tired and fell ſo faſt aſleep.

I go on, *Thirdly*, to ſet forth the great evil of this neglect and ſcorn of preaching, and to diſcover the real cauſes from whence it proceedeth.

I think it is obvious to believe, that this neglect of preaching hath very much occaſioned the great decay of religion among us. To this may be imputed no ſmall part of that contempt ſome men beſtow on the clergy;

clergy; for, whoever talketh without being regarded, is ſure to be deſpiſed. To this we owe, in a great meaſure, the ſpreading of atheiſm and infidelity among us; for, religion, like all other things, is ſooneſt put out of countenance by being ridiculed. The ſcorn of preaching might perhaps have been at firſt introduced by men of nice ears and refined taſte; but, it is now become a ſpreading evil, through all degrees, and both ſexes; for, ſince ſleeping, talking and laughing are qualities ſufficient to furniſh out a critic, the meaneſt and moſt ignorant have ſet up a title, and ſucceed in it as well as their betters. Thus are the laſt efforts of reforming mankind rendered wholely uſeleſs: *How ſhall they hear*, ſaith the apoſtle, *without a preacher?* But, if they have a preach-

er, and make it a point of wit or breeding not to hear him, what remedy is left? To this neglect of preaching, we may alſo entirely impute that groſs ignorance among us in the very principles of religion, which it is amazing to find in perſons who very much value their own knowledge and underſtanding in other things; yet, it is a viſible, inexcuſeable ignorance, even in the meaneſt among us, conſidering the many advantages they have of learning their duty. And, it hath been the great encouragement to all manner of vice: For, in vain we preach down ſin to a people, *whoſe hearts are waxed groſs, whoſe ears are dull of hearing*, and *whoſe eyes are cloſed*. Therefore Chriſt himſelf, in his diſcourſes, frequently rouſeth up the attention of the multitude, and of

his

his diſciples themſelves, with this expreſſion, *He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.* But, among all neglects of preaching, none is ſo fatal as that of ſleeping in the houſe of God; a ſcorner may liſten to truth and reaſon, and in time grow ſerious; an unbeliever may feel the pangs of a guilty conſcience; one whoſe thoughts or eyes wander among other objects, may, by a lucky word, be called back to attention: But the ſleeper ſhuts up all avenues to his ſoul: He is *like the deaf adder, that hearkeneth not to the voice of the charmer, charm he never ſo wiſely.* And, we may preach with as good ſucceſs to the grave that is under his feet.

But the great evil of this neglect will further yet appear, from conſi-

dering the real cauſes whence it proceedeth; whereof the firſt, I take to be, an evil conſcience. Many men come to church to ſave or gain a reputation; or becauſe they will not be ſingular, but comply with an eſtabliſhed cuſtom; yet, all the while, they are loaded with the guilt of old rooted ſins. Theſe men can expect to hear of nothing but terrors and threatenings, their ſins laid open in true colours, and eternal miſery the reward of them; therefore no wonder they ſtop their ears, and divert their thoughts, and ſeek any amuſement, rather than ſtir the hell within them.

ANOTHER cauſe of this neglect is, a heart ſet upon wordly things. Men whoſe minds are much enſlaved to earthly affairs all the week, cannot diſengage

diſengage or break the chain of their thoughts ſo ſuddenly, as to apply to a diſcourſe that is wholely foreign to what they have moſt at heart. Tell a uſurer of charity, and mercy, and reſtitution, you talk to the deaf; his heart and ſoul, with all his ſenſes, are got among his bags, or he is gravely aſleep, and dreaming of a mortgage. Tell a man of buſineſs, that the cares of the world choak the good ſeed; that we muſt not encumber ourſelves with much ſerving; that the ſalvation of his ſoul is the one thing neceſſary: You ſee, indeed, the ſhape of a man before you, but his faculties are all gone off among clients and papers, thinking how to defend a bad cauſe, or find flaws in a good one; or, he weareth out the time in drouſy nods.

A third cauſe of the great neglect and ſcorn of preaching, ariſeth from the practice of men who ſet up to decry and diſparage religion; theſe, being zealous to promote infidelity and vice, learn a rote of buffoonry that ſerveth all occaſions, and refutes the ſtrongeſt arguments for piety and good manners. Theſe have a ſet of ridicule calculated for all ſermons, and all preachers, and can be extreme witty as often as they pleaſe upon the ſame fund.

Let me now, in the laſt place, offer ſome remedies againſt this great live.

It will be one remedy againſt the contempt of preaching, rightly to conſider the end for which it was deſigned. There are many who place

place abundance of merit in going to church, although it be with no other proſpect but that of being well entertained, wherein if they happen to fail, they return wholely diſappointed. Hence it is become an impertinent vein among people of all ſorts to hunt after what they call a good ſermon, as if it were a matter of paſtime and diverſion. Our buſineſs, alas! is quite another thing, either to learn, or, at leaſt, be reminded of our duty, to apply the doctrines delivered, compare the rules we hear with our lives and actions, and find wherein we have tranſgreſſed. Theſe are the diſpoſitions men ſhould bring into the houſe of God, and then they will be little concerned about the preacher's wit or eloquence, nor be curious to enquire out his faults or in-

firmities, but conſider how to correct their own.

ANOTHER remedy againſt the contempt of preaching, is, that men would conſider, whether it be not reaſonable to give more allowances for the different abilities of preachers than they uſually do; refinements of ſtyle, and flights of wit, as they are not properly the buſineſs of any preacher, ſo they cannot poſſibly be the talents of all. In moſt other diſcourſes, men are ſatisfied with ſober ſenſe and plain reaſon; and, as underſtandings uſually go, even that is not over frequent. Then why they ſhould be ſo over nice and expecting for ſenſe, where it is neither neceſſary nor convenient, is hard to imagine.

Laſtly,

Laſtly, The ſcorners of preaching would do well to conſider, that this talent of ridicule, they value ſo much, is a perfection very eaſily acquired; and applied to all things whatſoever; neither is it any thing at all the worſe, becauſe it is capable of being perverted to burleſque: Perhaps it may be the more perfect upon that ſcore; ſince we know, the moſt celebrated pieces have been thus treated with greateſt ſucceſs. It is in any man's power to ſuppoſe a fool's cap on the wiſeſt head, and then laugh at his own ſuppoſition. I think there are not many things cheaper than ſuppoſing and laughing; and if the uniting theſe two talents can bring a thing into any contempt, it is hard to know where it may end.

To conclude. Theſe conſiderations may, perhaps, have ſome effect while men are awake; but what arguments ſhall we uſe to the ſleeper? What methods ſhall we take to hold open his eyes? Will he be moved by conſiderations of common civility? We know it is reckoned a point of very bad manners to ſleep in private company, when, perhaps, the tedious impertinence of many talkers would render it at leaſt as excuſeable as at the dulleſt ſermon. Do they think it a ſmall thing to watch four hours at a play, where all virtue and religion are openly reviled; and can they not watch one half hour to hear them defended? Is this to deal like a judge, (I mean like a good judge) to liſten on one ſide of the cauſe, and ſleep on the other? I ſhall add but one word more: That

this

this indecent ſloth is very much owing to that luxury and exceſs men uſually practiſe upon this day, by which half the ſervice thereof is turned to ſin; men dividing the time between God and their bellies, when after a gluttonous meal, their ſenſes dozed and ſtupified, they retire to God's houſe to ſleep out the afternoon. Surely, brethren, theſe things ought not ſo to be.

He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. And God give us all grace to hear and receive his holy word to the ſalvation of our own ſouls.

SER-

SERMON IX.

UPON THE

Martyrdom of K. CHARLES I.

Preached at St. Patrick's, Dublin, Jan. 30. 1725-6, being Sunday.

SERMON IX.

GENESIS xlix. 5, 6, 7.

SIMEON *and* LEVI *are brethren; inſtruments of cruelty are in their habitations.*

O my ſoul, come not thou into their ſecret; unto their aſſembly, mine honour, be not thou united: for in their anger they ſlew a man, and in their ſelf-will they digged down a wall.

Curſed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel. I will divide them in JACOB, *and ſcatter them in* ISRAEL.

I KNOW very well, that the church hath been often cenſured for keeping

keeping holy this day of humiliation, in memory of that excellent king and bleſſed Martyr CHARLES I. who rather choſe to die on a ſcaffold than betray the religion and liberties of his people, wherewith GOD and the laws had entruſted him. But, at the ſame time, it is manifeſt that thoſe who make ſuch cenſures are either people without any religion at all, or who derive their principles, and perhaps their birth, from the abettors of thoſe who contrived the murder of that Prince, and have not yet ſhewn the world that their opinions are changed. It is alledged that the obſervation of this day hath ſerved to continue and encreaſe the animoſity and enmity among our countrymen, and to diſunite Proteſtants; that a law was made, upon the reſtoration of the martyr's ſon,

for

for a general pardon and oblivion, forbidding all reproaches upon that occaſion; and, ſince none are now alive who were actors or inſtruments in that tragedy, it is thought hard and uncharitable to keep up the memory of it for all generations. Now, becauſe I conceive moſt of you to be ignorant in many particulars concerning that horrid murder, and the rebellion which preceded it; I will,

FIRST, Relate to you ſo much of the ſtory as may be ſufficient for your information:

SECONDLY, I will tell you the conſequences which this bloody deed had upon theſe kingdoms:

AND, laſtly, I will ſhew you to what

what good uſes this ſolemn day of humiliation may be applied.

As to the firſt, in the reign of this Prince, Charles the Martyr, the power and prerogative of the king were much greater than they are in our times, and ſo had been for at leaſt 700 years before: And the beſt princes we ever had, carried their power much farther than the bleſſed Martyr offered to do in the moſt blameable part of his reign. But, the lands of the crown having been prodigally beſtowed to favourites, in the preceding reigns, the ſucceeding kings could not ſupport themſelves without taxes raiſed by parliament; which put them under a neceſſity of frequently calling thoſe aſſemblies: And, the crown-lands being gotten into the hands of the nobility and gentry,

gentry, beſide the poſſeſſions of which the church had been robbed by Henry VIII.; power, which always follows property, grew to lean to the ſide of the people, by whom even the juſt rights of the crown were often diſputed.

But further: Upon the cruel perſecution raiſed againſt the Proteſtants, under Queen Mary, among great numbers who fled the kingdom to ſeek for ſhelter, ſeveral went and reſided at Geneva, which is a commonwealth governed without a king, and where the religion, contrived by Calvin, is without the order of biſhops. When the proteſtant faith was reſtored by Queen Elizabeth, thoſe who fled to Geneva returned among the reſt home to England, and were grown ſo fond of the government

vernment and religion of the place they had left, that they uſed all poſſible endeavours to introduce both into their own country; at the ſame time continually preaching and railing againſt ceremonies and diſtinct habits of the clergy, taxing whatever they diſliked, as a remnant of popery, and continued extremely troubleſome to the church and ſtate, under that great Queen, as well as her ſucceſſor King James I. Theſe people called themſelves *Puritans*, as pretending to a purer faith than thoſe of the church eſtabliſhed. And theſe were the founders of our diſſenters. They did not think it ſufficient to leave all the errors of popery, but threw off many laudable and edifying inſtitutions of the Primitive Church, and, at laſt, even the government of biſhops; which, having been

been ordained by the apoſtles themſelves, had continued without interruption, in all Chriſtian churches, for above 1500 years. And all this they did, not becauſe thoſe things were evil, but becauſe they were kept by the Papiſts. From thence they proceeded, by degrees, to quarrel with the kingly government; becauſe, as I have already ſaid, the city of Geneva, to which their fathers had flown for refuge, was a commonwealth, or government of the people.

THESE Puritans, about the middle of the martyr's reign, were grown to be a conſiderable faction in the kingdom, and in the lower houſe of parliament. They filled the publick with the moſt falſe and bitter libels againſt the biſhops and clergy, ac-

cuſing chiefly the very beſt among them of popery; and, at the ſame time, the Houſe of Commons grew ſo inſolent and uneaſy to the King, that they refuſed to furniſh him with neceſſary ſupplies for the ſupport of his family, unleſs upon ſuch conditions as he could not ſubmit to without forfeiting his conſcience and honour, and even his coronation-oath. And, in ſuch an extremity, he was forced upon a practice, no way juſtifiable, of raiſing money; for which, however, he had the opinion of the judges on his ſide: For, wicked judges there were in thoſe times as well as in ours. There were likewiſe many complaints, and ſometimes juſtly, made againſt the proceedings of a certain court, called the Star-chamber, a judicature of great antiquity, but had ſuffered

ſome

ſome corruptions, for which, however, the King was no way anſwerable. I cannot recollect any more ſubjects of complaint with the leaſt ground of reaſon, nor is it needful to recollect them, becauſe this gracious King did, upon the firſt application, redreſs all grievances by an act of parliament, and put it out of his power to do any hardſhips for the future. But, that wicked faction in the Houſe of Commons, not content with all thoſe marks of his juſtice and condeſcenſion, urged ſtill for more; and joining with a factious party from Scotland, who had the ſame fancies in religion, forced him to paſs an act for cutting off the head of his beſt and chief miniſter; and, at the ſame time, compelled him, by tumults and threatenings of a packt rabble, poiſoned with the

ſame doctrines, to paſs another law, by which it ſhould not be in his power to diſſolve that parliament without their own conſent. Thus, by the greateſt weakneſs and infatuation that ever poſſeſſed any man's ſpirit, this Prince did in effect ſign his own deſtruction. For the Houſe of Commons, having the reins in their own hands, drove on furiouſly; ſent him every day ſome unreaſonable demand, and when he refuſed to grant it, made uſe of their own power, and declared that an ordinance of both Houſes, without the King's conſent, ſhould be obeyed as a law, contrary to all reaſon and equity, as well as to the fundamental conſtitution of the kingdom.

About this time the rebellion in Ireland broke out, wherein his parliament

liament refuſed to aſſiſt him; nor would accept his offer to come hither in perſon to ſubdue thoſe rebels. Theſe, and a thouſand other barbarities, forced the King to ſummon his loyal ſubjects to his ſtandard in his own defence. Meanwhile the Engliſh parliament, inſtead of helping the poor Proteſtants here, ſeized on the very army that his Majeſty was ſending over for our relief, and turned them againſt their own ſovereign. The rebellion in England continued for four or five years: At laſt the King was forced to fly in diſguiſe to the Scots, who ſold him to the rebels. And theſe puritans had the impudent cruelty to try his ſacred perſon in a mock court of juſtice, and cut off his head; which he might have ſaved, if he would

have yielded to betray the conſtitution in church and ſtate.

In this whole proceeding Simeon and Levi were brethren, the wicked inſinuations of thoſe fanatical preachers ſtirring up the cruelty of the ſoldiers, who, by force of arms, excluded from the Houſe every member of parliament, whom they apprehended to bear the leaſt inclination towards an agreement with the King, ſuffering only thoſe to enter who thirſted chiefly for his blood; and this is the very account given by their own writers. From whence it is clear that this Prince was, in all reſpects, a real martyr for the true religion and the liberty of his people. That odious parliament had firſt turned the biſhops out of the Houſe of Lords; in a few years after,

ter, they murdered their King; then immediately aboliſhed the whole Houſe of Lords; and ſo, at laſt, obtained their wiſhes, of having a government of the people, and a new religion, both after the manner of Geneva, without a king, a biſhop, or a nobleman; and this they blaſphemouſly called the kingdom of Chriſt and his ſaints.

THIS is enough for your information on the firſt head: I ſhall therefore proceed to the ſecond, wherein I will ſhew you the miſerable conſequences which that abominable rebellion and murder produced in theſe nations.

FIRST, The Iriſh rebellion was wholly owing to that wicked Engliſh parliament. For the leaders in

the Iriſh Popiſh maſſacre would never have dared to ſtir a finger, if they had not been encouraged by that rebellious ſpirit in the Engliſh Houſe of Commons, which they very well knew muſt diſable the King from ſending any ſupplies to his Proteſtant ſubjects here; and, therefore, we may truly ſay that the Engliſh parliament held the King's hands, while the Iriſh Papiſts here were cutting our grandfathers throats.

SECONDLY, That murderous Puritan-parliament, when they had all in their own power, could not agree upon any one method of ſettling a form either of religion or civil government, but changed every day from ſchiſm to ſchiſm, from hereſy to hereſy, and from one faction to another. From whence aroſe

roſe that wild confuſion ſtill continuing in our ſeveral ways of ſerving God, and thoſe abſurd notions of civil power, which have ſo often torn us with factions more than any other nation in Europe.

THIRDLY, To this rebellion and murder have been owing the riſe and progreſs of atheiſm among us. For, men obſerving what numberleſs villanies of all kinds were committed during twenty years, under pretence of zeal and the reformation of God's church, were eaſily tempted to doubt that all religion was a mere impoſture: And the ſame ſpirit of infidelity, ſo far ſpread among us at this preſent, is nothing but the fruit of the ſeeds ſown by thoſe rebellious hypocritical ſaints.

FOURTHLY, The old virtue and loyalty, and generous ſpirit of the Engliſh nation, were wholly corrupted by the power, the doctrine, and the example of thoſe wicked people. Many of the antient nobility were killed, and their families extinct, in defence of their Prince and country, or murdered by the mercileſs courts of juſtice. Some of the worſt among them favoured, or complied with the reigning iniquities, and not a few of the new ſet created, when the martyr's ſon was reſtored, were ſuch who had drank too deep of the bad principles then prevailing.

FIFTHLY, The children of the murdered Prince were forced to fly, for the ſafety of their lives, to foreign countries; where one of them at leaſt, I mean King James II. was ſeduced

ſeduced to Popery; which ended in the loſs of his kingdoms, the miſery and deſolations of this country, and a long and expenſive war abroad. Our deliverance was owing to the valour and conduct of the late King; and, therefore, we ought to remember him with gratitude, but not mingled with blaſphemy or idolatry. It was happy that his intereſt and ours were the ſame: And God gave him greater ſucceſs than our ſins deſerved. But, as a houſe thrown down by a ſtorm is ſeldom rebuilt, without ſome change in the foundation; ſo it hath happened, that, ſince the late revolution, men have ſate much looſer in the true fundamentals both of religion and government, and factions have been more violent, treacherous, and malicious than ever, men running naturally

from one extreme into another; and, for private ends, taking up thoſe very opinions profeſſed by the leaders in that rebellion, which carried the bleſſed martyr to the ſcaffold.

SIXTHLY, Another conſequence of this horrid rebellion and murder was the deſtroying or defacing ſuch vaſt numbers of God's houſes. *In their ſelf-will they digged down a wall.* If a ſtranger ſhould now travel in England, and obſerve the churches in his way, he could not otherwiſe conclude, than that ſome vaſt army of Turks or Heathens had been ſent on purpoſe to ruin and blot out all marks of Chriſtianity. They ſpared neither the ſtatues of ſaints, or antient prelates, or kings, or benefactors; broke down the tombs and monuments of men famous in their generations,

generations, ſeized the veſſels of ſilver ſet apart for the holieſt uſe, tore down the moſt innocent ornaments both within and without, made the houſes of prayer dens of thieves, or ſtables for cattle. Theſe were the mildeſt effects of Puritan-zeal, and devotion for Chriſt; and this was what themſelves affected to call a thorough reformation. In this kingdom thoſe ravages were not ſo eaſily ſeen; for the people here being too poor to raiſe ſuch noble temples, the mean ones we had were not defaced, but totally deſtroyed.

Upon the whole, it is certain, that although God might have found out many other ways to have puniſhed a ſinful people, without permitting this rebellion and murder, yet as the courſe of the world hath run ever ſince,

ſince, we need ſeek for no other cauſes, of all the public evils we have hitherto ſuffered, or may ſuffer for the future, by the miſconduct of princes, or wickedneſs of the people.

I GO on now upon the third head, to ſhew you to what good uſes this ſolemn day of humiliation may be applied.

FIRST, It may be an inſtruction to princes themſelves, to be careful in the choice of thoſe who are their adviſers in matters of law. All the judges of England, except one or two, adviſed the King, that he might legally raiſe money upon the ſubjects for building of ſhips, without conſent of parliament; which, as it was the greateſt overſight of his reign, ſo it proved the principal foundation of

of all his misfortunes. Princes may likewiſe learn from hence, not to ſacrifice a faithful ſervant to the rage of a faction, nor to truſt any body of men with a greater ſhare of power than the laws of the land have appointed them, much leſs to depoſite it in their hands until they ſhall pleaſe to reſtore it.

SECONDLY, By bringing to mind the tragedy of this day, and the conſequences that have ariſen from it, we ſhall be convinced how neceſſary it is for thoſe in power to curb, in ſeaſon, all ſuch unruly ſpirits as deſire to introduce new doctrines and diſcipline in the church, or new forms of government in the ſtate. Thoſe wicked Puritans began, in Queen Elizabeth's time, to quarrel only with ſurplices and other habits,

habits, with the ring in matrimony, the croſs in baptiſm, and the like; thence they went on to further matters of higher importance, and, at laſt, they muſt needs have the whole government of the church diſſolved. This great work they compaſſed, firſt, by depriving the biſhops of their ſeats in parliament, then they aboliſhed the whole order; and, at laſt, which was their original deſign, they ſeized on all the church-lands, and divided the ſpoil among themſelves; and, like Jeroboam, made prieſts of the very dregs of the people. This was their way of reforming the church. As to the civil government, you have already heard how they modelled it upon the murder of their King, and diſcarding the nobility. Yet, clearly to ſhew what a Babel they had built, after

twelve

twelve years trial and twenty ſeveral ſorts of government; the nation grown weary of their tyranny, was forced to call in the ſon of him whom thoſe reformers had ſacrificed. And thus were Simeon and Levi divided in Jacob and ſcattered in Iſrael.

THIRDLY, Although the ſucceſſors of thoſe Puritans, I mean our preſent diſſenters, do not think fit to obſerve this day of humiliation; yet, ſince it would be very proper in them, upon ſome occaſions, to renounce in a publick manner thoſe principles upon which their predeceſſors acted; and it will be more prudent in them to do ſo, becauſe thoſe very Puritans, of whom ours are followers, found by experience, that after they had overturned the church and ſtate, murdered their King,

King, and were projecting what they called a kingdom of the ſaints, they were cheated of the power and poſſeſſions they only panted after, by an upſtart ſect of religion that grew out of their own bowels, who ſubjected them to one tyrant, while they were endeavouring to ſet up a thouſand.

FOURTHLY, Thoſe who profeſs to be followers of our church eſtabliſhed, and yet preſume in diſcourſe to juſtify or excuſe that rebellion, and murder of the King, ought to conſider, how utterly contrary all ſuch opinions are to the doctrine of Chriſt and his apoſtles, as well as to the articles of our church, and to the preaching and practice of it's true profeſſors for above an hundred years. Of late times, indeed, and

I ſpeak it with grief of heart, we have heard even ſermons of a ſtrange nature; although reaſon would make one think it a very unaccountable way of procuring favour under a monarchy, by palliating and leſſening the guilt of thoſe who murdered the beſt of Kings in cold blood, and, for a time, deſtroyed the very monarchy itſelf. Pray God we may never more hear ſuch doctrine from the pulpit, nor have it ſcattered about in print, to poiſon the people.

FIFTHLY, Some general knowledge of this horrid rebellion and murder, with the conſequences they had upon theſe nations, may be a warning to our people not to believe a lie, and to miſtruſt thoſe deluding ſpirits, who, under pretence of a purer and more reformed religion, would

would lead them from their duty to God and the laws. Politicians may ſay what they pleaſe, but it is no hard thing at all for the meaneſt perſon, who hath common underſtanding, to know whether he be well or ill governed. If he be freely allowed to follow his trade and calling; if he be ſecure in his property, and hath the benefit of the law to defend himſelf againſt injuſtice and oppreſſion: If his religion be different from that of his country, and the government think fit to tolerate it, (which he may be very ſecure of, let it be what it will;) he ought to be fully ſatisfied, and give no offence, by writing or diſcourſe, to the worſhip eſtabliſhed, as the diſſenting preachers are too apt to do. But, if he hath any new viſions of his own, it is his duty to be quiet and poſſeſs them.

them in ſilence, without diſturbing the community by a furious zeal for making proſelytes. This was the folly and madneſs of thoſe antient Puritan fanatics: They muſt needs overturn heaven and earth, violate all the laws of God and man, make their country a field of blood, to propagate whatever wild or wicked opinions came into their heads, declaring all their abſurdities and blaſphemies to proceed from the Holy Ghoſt.

To conclude this head. In anſwer to that objection of keeping up animoſity and hatred between Proteſtants, by the obſervation of this day; if there be any ſect or ſort of people among us, who profeſs the ſame principles in religion and government which thoſe Puritan rebels put

put in practice; I think it is the intereſt of all thoſe who love the church and king, to keep up as ſtrong a party againſt them as poſſible, until they ſhall, in a body, renounce all thoſe wicked opinions upon which their predeceſſors acted, to the diſgrace of Chriſtianity, and the perpetual infamy of the Engliſh nation.

When we accuſe the Papiſts of the horrid doctrine, that no faith ought to be kept with Hereticks, they deny it to a man; and yet we juſtly think it dangerous to truſt them, becauſe we know their actions have been ſometimes ſuitable to that opinion: But the followers of thoſe who beheaded the Martyr have not yet renounced their principles; and, till they do, they may be juſtly ſuſpected:

ed: Neither will the bare name of Proteſtants ſet them right. For, ſurely, Chriſt requires more from us than a profeſſion of hating Popery, which a Turk or an Atheiſt may do as well as a Proteſtant.

If an enſlaved people ſhould recover their liberty, from a tyrannical power of any ſort, who could blame them for commemorating their deliverance by a day of joy and thankſgiving? And doth not the deſtruction of a church, a king, and three kingdoms, by the artifices, hypocriſy, and cruelty of a wicked race of ſoldiers and preachers, and other ſons of Belial, equally require a ſolemn time of humiliation? eſpecially ſince the conſequences of that bloody ſcene ſtill continue, as I have already ſhewn, in their effects upon us.

THUS I have done with the three heads I propoſed to diſcourſe on. But, before I conclude, I muſt give a caution to thoſe who hear me, that they may not think I am pleading for abſolute unlimited power in any one man. It is true, all power is from God, and, as the apoſtle ſays, *The powers that be are ordained of God;* but this is in the ſame ſenſe, that all we have is from God, our food and raiment, and whatever poſſeſſion we hold by lawful means. Nothing can be meant in thoſe, or any other words of Scripture, to juſtify tyrannical power, or the ſavage cruelty of thoſe Heathen emperors who lived in the time of the apoſtles: And ſo St. Paul concludes, *The powers that be, are ordained of God:* For what? Why, *for the puniſhment of evil doers, and the praiſe, the reward of them that do*

do well. There is no more inward value in the greateſt emperor, than in the meaneſt of his ſubjects: His body is compoſed of the ſame ſubſtance, the ſame parts, and with the ſame or greater infirmities: His education is generally worſe, by flattery, and idleneſs, and luxury, and thoſe evil diſpoſitions that early power is apt to give. It is therefore againſt common ſenſe, that his private perſonal intereſt, or pleaſure, ſhould be put in the ballance with the ſafety of millions, every one of which is his equal by nature, equal in the ſight of God, equally capable of ſalvation; and it is for their ſakes, not his own, that he is entruſted with the government over them. He hath as high truſt as can ſafely be repoſed in one man, and, if he diſcharge it as he ought, he deſerves

all the honour and duty that a mortal may be allowed to receive. His perſonal failings we have nothing to do with, and errors in government are to be imputed to his miniſters in the ſtate. To what height thoſe errors may be ſuffered to proceed, is not the buſineſs of this day, or this place, or of my function, to determine. When oppreſſions grow too great and univerſal to be borne, nature or neceſſity may find a remedy. But, if a private perſon reaſonably expects pardon, upon his amendment, for all faults that are not capital, it would be an hard condition indeed, not to give the ſame allowance to a prince; who muſt ſee with other men's eyes, and hear with other men's ears, which are often wilfully blind and deaf. Such was the condition of the Martyr, and is ſo,

in

in ſome degree, of all other princes. Yet, this we may juſtly ſay in defence of the common people, in all civilized nations, that it muſt be a very bad government indeed, where the body of the ſubjects will not rather chooſe to live in peace and obedience, than take up arms on pretence of faults in the adminiſtration, unleſs where the vulgar are deluded by falſe preachers to grow fond of new viſions and fancies in religion, which managed by dextrous men, for ſiniſter ends of malice, envy or ambition, have often made whole nations run mad. This was exactly the caſe in the whole progreſs of that great rebellion, and the murder of King Charles I.; but the late revolution under the Prince of Orange was occaſioned by a proceeding directly contrary, the oppreſ-

ſion and injuſtice there beginning from the throne. For that unhappy Prince, King James II. did not only invade our laws and liberties, but would have forced a falſe religion upon his ſubjects, for which he was deſervedly rejected, ſince there could be no other remedy found, or at leaſt agreed on. But, under the bleſſed Martyr, the deluded people would have forced many falſe religions, not only on their fellow ſubjects, but even upon their Sovereign himſelf, and at the ſame time invaded all his undoubted rights; and, becauſe he would not comply, raiſed a horrid rebellion, wherein, by the permiſſion of God, they prevailed, and put their Sovereign to death, like a common criminal, in the face of the world.

THEREFORE,

THEREFORE, thoſe who ſeem to think they cannot otherwiſe juſtify the late revolution, and the change of the ſucceſſion, than by leſſening the guilt of the Puritans, do certainly put the greateſt affront imaginable upon the preſent powers, by ſuppoſing any relation, or reſemblance, between that rebellion and the late revolution; and, conſequently, that the preſent eſtabliſhment is to be defended by the ſame arguments which thoſe uſurpers made uſe of, who, to obtain their tyranny, trampled under foot all the laws both of God and man.

ONE great deſign of my diſcourſe was to give you warning againſt running into either extreme of two bad opinions, with relation to obedience. As kings are called Gods upon earth,

ſo ſome would allow them an equal power with God, over all laws and ordinances; and that the liberty, and property, and life, and religion of the ſubject, depended wholly upon the breath of the prince; which however, I hope, was never meant by thoſe who pleaded for paſſive-obedience. And this opinion hath not been confined to that party which was firſt charged with it, but hath ſometimes gone over to the other, to ſerve many an evil turn of intereſt or ambition, who have been as ready to enlarge prerogative, where they could find their own account, as the higheſt maintainers of it.

On the other ſide, ſome look upon kings as anſwerable for every miſtake or omiſſion in government, and bound to comply with the moſt unreaſonable

reaſonable demands of an unquiet faction, which was the caſe of thoſe who perſecuted the bleſſed Martyr of this day from his throne to the ſcaffold.

BETWEEN theſe two extremes, it is eaſy, from what hath been ſaid, to chuſe a middle; to be good and loyal ſubjects, yet, according to your power, faithful aſſertors of your religion and liberties. To avoid all broachers and preachers of new-fangled doctrines in the church; to be ſtrict obſervers of the laws, which cannot juſtly be taken from you without your own conſent. In ſhort, *to obey God and the king, and meddle not with thoſe who are given to change.*

WHICH that you may all do, *&c.*

SERMON X.

DOING GOOD:

ON

The Occaſion of WOOD's PROJECT.

Written in the Year MDCCXXIV.

SERMON X.

GALATIANS vi. 10.

As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men.

NATURE directs every one of us, and God permits us, to conſult our own private good before the private good of any other perſon whatſoever. We are, indeed, commanded to love our neighbour as ourſelves, but not as well as ourſelves. The love we have for ourſelves is to be the pattern of that love we ought to have towards our neighbour: But, as the copy doth not equal the

original, ſo my neighbour cannot think it hard, if I prefer myſelf, who am the original, before him, who is only the copy. Thus, if any matter equally concern the life, the reputation, the profit of my neighbour, and my own; the law of nature, which is the law of God, obligeth me to take care of myſelf firſt, and afterwards of him. And this I need not be at much pains in perſuading you to; for the want of ſelf-love, with regard to things of this world, is not among the faults of mankind. But then, on the other ſide, if, by a ſmall hurt and loſs to myſelf, I can procure a great good to my neighbour, in that caſe his intereſt is to be preferred. For example, if I can be ſure of ſaving his life, without great danger to my own; if I can preſerve him from being undone,

without

without ruining myſelf, or recover his reputation without blaſting mine: All this I am obliged to do: And, if I ſincerely perform it, I do then obey the command of God, in loving my neighbour as myſelf.

But, beſide this love we owe to every man in his particular capacity under the title of our neighbour, there is yet a duty of a more large extenſive nature incumbent on us; which is, our love to our neighbour in his public capacity, as he is a member of that great body the commonwealth, under the ſame government with ourſelves; and this is uſually called love of the public, and is a duty to which we are more ſtrictly obliged than even that of loving ourſelves; becauſe therein ourſelves are alſo contained, as well

as

as all our neighbours, in one great body. This love of the public, or of the commonwealth, or love of our country, was in antient times properly known by the name of *Virtue*, becauſe it was the greateſt of all virtues, and was ſuppoſed to contain all virtues in it: And many great examples of this virtue are left us on record, ſcarcely to be believed, or even conceived, in ſuch a baſe, corrupted, wicked age as this we live in. In thoſe times it was common for men to ſacrifice their lives for the good of their country, although they had neither hope nor belief of future rewards; whereas, in our days, very few make the leaſt ſcruple of ſacrificing a whole nation, as well as their own ſouls, for a little preſent gain; which often hath been known to end in their own ruin in

this

this world, as it certainly muſt in that to come.

HAVE we not ſeen men, for the ſake of ſome petty employment, give up the very natural rights and liberties of their country, and of mankind, in the ruin of which themſelves muſt at laſt be involved? Are not theſe corruptions gotten among the meaneſt of our people, who, for a piece of money, will give their votes at a venture, for the diſpoſal of their own lives and fortunes, without conſidering whether it be to thoſe who are moſt likely to betray or defend them?

BUT, if I were to produce only one inſtance of a hundred wherein we fail in this duty of loving our country, it would be an endleſs labour;

bour; and therefore I ſhall not attempt it.

But here I would not be miſunderſtood: By the love of our country I do not mean loyalty to our king, for that is a duty of another nature; and a man may be very loyal, in the common ſenſe of the word, without one grain of public good at his heart. Witneſs this very kingdom we live in. I verily believe, that, ſince the beginning of the world, no nation upon earth ever ſhewed (all circumſtances conſidered) ſuch high conſtant marks of loyalty in all their actions and behaviour, as we have done: And, at the ſame time, no people ever appeared more utterly void of what is called a public ſpirit. When I ſay the people, I mean the bulk or maſs

of

of the people, for I have nothing to do with thoſe in power.

THEREFORE I ſhall think my time not ill ſpent, if I can perſuade moſt or all of you who hear me, to ſhew the love you have for your country, by endeavouring, in your ſeveral ſtations, to do all the public good you are able. For I am certainly perſuaded, that all your misfortunes ariſe from no other original cauſe than that general diſregard among us to the public welfare.

I therefore undertake to ſhew you three things.

FIRST, That there are few people ſo weak or mean, who have it not ſometimes in their power to be uſeful to the public.

SECONDLY,

SECONDLY, That it is often in the power of the meaneſt among mankind to do miſchief to the public.

AND, laſtly, That all wilful injuries done to the public are very great and aggravated ſins in the ſight of God.

FIRST, There are few people ſo weak or mean, who have it not ſometimes in their power to be uſeful to the public.

SOLOMON tells us of a poor wiſe man who ſaved a city by his counſel. It hath often happened that a private ſoldier, by ſome unexpected brave attempt, hath been inſtrumental in obtaining a great victory. How many obſcure men have been authors of very uſeful inventions,

whereof

whereof the world now reaps the benefit? The very example of honesty and industry in a poor tradesman will sometimes spread through a neighbourhood, when others see how successful he is; and thus so many useful members are gained, for which the whole body of the public is the better. Whoever is blessed with a true public spirit, God will certainly put it into his way to make use of that blessing, for the ends it was given him, by some means or other: And therefore it hath been observed in most ages, that the greatest actions, for the benefit of the commonwealth, have been performed by the wisdom or courage, the contrivance or industry, of particular men, and not of numbers; and that the safety of a kingdom hath

hath often been owing to thoſe hands from whence it was leaſt expected.

But, ſecondly, it is often in the power of the meaneſt among mankind to do miſchief to the public: And hence ariſe moſt of thoſe miſeries with which the ſtates and kingdoms of the earth are infeſted. How many great princes have been murdered by the meaneſt ruffians? The weakeſt hand can open a flood-gate to drown a country, which a thouſand of the ſtrongeſt cannot ſtop. Thoſe who have thrown off all regard for public good, will often have it in their power to do public evil, and will not fail to exerciſe that power whenever they can. The greateſt blow given of late to this kingdom, was by the diſhoneſty of a few manufacturers; who, by impoſing

poſing bad ware at foreign markets, in almoſt the only traffic permitted to us, did half ruin that trade; by which this poor unhappy kingdom now ſuffers in the midſt of ſufferings. I ſpeak not here of perſons in high ſtations, who ought to be free from all reflection, and are ſuppoſed always to intend the welfare of the community: But we now find by experience, that the meaneſt inſtrument may, by the concurrence of accidents, have it in his power to bring a whole kingdom to the very brink of deſtruction, and is at this preſent, endeavouring to finiſh his work; and hath agents among ourſelves, who are contented to ſee their own country undone, to be ſmall ſharers in that iniquitous gain, which at laſt muſt end in their own ruin as well as ours. I confeſs, it

was chiefly the conſideration of that great danger we are in, which engaged me to diſcourſe to you on this ſubject; to exhort you to a love of your country, and a public ſpirit, when all you have is at ſtake; to prefer the intereſt of your prince and your fellow-ſubjects before that of one deſtructive impoſtor, and a few of his adherents.

PERHAPS it may be thought by ſome, that this way of diſcourſing is not ſo proper for the pulpit. But ſurely, when an open attempt is made, and far carried on, to make a great kingdom one large poor-houſe, to deprive us of all means to exerciſe hoſpitality or charity, to turn our cities and churches into ruins, to make the country a deſert for wild beaſts and robbers, to deſtroy

all

all arts and ſciences, all trades and manufactures, and the very tillage of the ground, only to enrich one obſcure ill-deſigning projector, and his followers; it is time for the paſtor to cry out that the wolf is getting into his flock, to warn them to ſtand together, and all to conſult the common ſafety. And God be praiſed for his infinite goodneſs in raiſing ſuch a ſpirit of union among us, at leaſt in this point, in the midſt of all our former diviſions; which union, if it continue, will, in all probability, defeat the pernicious deſign of this peſtilent enemy to the nation.

But, from hence, it clearly follows how neceſſary the love of our country, or a public ſpirit, is in every particular man, ſince the wick-

ed

ed have ſo many opportunities of doing public miſchief. Every man is upon his own guard for his private advantage; but, where the public is concerned, he is apt to be negligent, conſidering himſelf only as one among two or three millions, among whom the loſs is equally ſhared, and thus, he thinks, he can be no great ſufferer. Meanwhile the trader, the farmer, and the ſhopkeeper, complain of the hardneſs and deadneſs of the times, and wonder whence it comes; while it is, in a great meaſure, owing to their own folly, for want of that love of their country, and public ſpirit and firm union among themſelves, which are ſo neceſſary to the proſperity of every nation.

ANOTHER method by which the meaneſt

meaneſt wicked man may have it in his power to injure the public, is falſe accuſation, whereof this kingdom hath afforded too many examples: Neither is it long ſince no man, whoſe opinions were thought to differ from thoſe in faſhion, could ſafely converſe beyond his neareſt friends, for fear of being ſworn againſt as a traitor, by thoſe who made a traffic of perjury and ſubornation; by which the very peace of the nation was diſturbed, and men fled from each other as they would from a lion or a bear got looſe. And, it is very remarkable, that the pernicious project now in hand to reduce us to beggary, was forwarded by one of theſe falſe accuſers, who had been convicted of endeavouring, by perjury and ſubornation, to take away the lives of ſeveral innocent per-

ſons here among us; and, indeed, there could not be a more proper inſtrument for ſuch a work.

ANOTHER method by which the meaneſt people may do injury to the public, is the ſpreading of lies and falſe rumours, thus raiſing a diſtruſt among the people of a nation, cauſing them to miſtake their true intereſt, and their enemies for their friends: And this hath been likewiſe too ſucceſsful a practice among us, where we have known the whole kingdom miſled by the groſſeſt lies, raiſed upon occaſion to ſerve ſome particular turn. As it hath alſo happened in the caſe I lately mentioned, where one obſcure man, by repreſenting our wants where they were leaſt, and concealing them where they were greateſt, had almoſt

moſt ſucceeded in a project of utterly ruining this whole kingdom; and may ſtill ſucceed, if God doth not continue that public ſpirit, which he hath almoſt miraculouſly kindled in us upon this occaſion.

THUS we ſee the public is many times, as it were, at the mercy of the meaneſt inſtrument, who can be wicked enough to watch opportunities of doing it miſchief, upon the principles of avarice or malice; which, I am afraid, are deeply rooted in too many breaſts, and againſt which there can be no defence, but a firm reſolution in all honeſt men, to be cloſely united and active in ſhewing their love to their country, by preferring the public intereſt to their preſent private advantage. If a paſſenger, in a great ſtorm at ſea, ſhould

hide his goods that they might not be thrown over board to lighten the ſhip, what would be the conſequence? The ſhip is caſt away, and he loſes his life and goods together.

We have heard of men, who, through greedineſs of gain, have brought infected goods into a nation, which bred a plague, whereof the owners and their families periſhed firſt. Let thoſe among us conſider this and tremble, whoſe houſes are privately ſtored with thoſe materials of beggary and deſolation, lately brought over to be ſcattered like a peſtilence among their countrymen, which may probably firſt ſeize upon themſelves and their families, until their houſes ſhall be made a dunghill.

I ſhall mention one practice more, by which the meaneſt inſtruments often ſucceed in doing public miſchief; and this is by deceiving us with plauſible arguments, to make us believe that the moſt ruinous project they can offer is intended for our good, as it happened in the caſe ſo often mentioned. For the poor ignorant people, allured by the appearing convenience in their ſmall dealings, did not diſcover the ſerpent in the braſs, but were ready, like the Iſraelites, to offer incenſe to it; neither could the wiſdom of the nation convince them, until ſome, of good intentions, made the cheat ſo plain to their ſight, that thoſe who run may read. And thus the deſign was to treat us, in every point, as the Philiſtines treated Samſon, (I mean, when he was betrayed by Da-

lilah) firſt to put out our eyes, and then bind us with fetters of braſs.

I proceed to the laſt thing I propoſed, which was to ſhew you that all wilful injuries done to the public, are very great and aggravated ſins in the ſight of God.

First, It is apparent from Scripture, and moſt agreeable to reaſon, that the ſafety and welfare of nations are under the moſt peculiar care of God's providence. Thus he promiſed Abraham to ſave Sodom, if only ten righteous men could be found in it. Thus the reaſon which God gave to Jonas for not deſtroying Nineveh was, becauſe there were ſix ſcore thouſand men in that city.

All government is from God, who

who is the God of order, and therefore whoever attempts to breed confuſion or diſturbance among a people, doth his utmoſt to take the government of the world out of God's hands, and to put it into the hands of the Devil, who is the author of confuſion. By which it is plain, that no crime, how heinous ſoever, committed againſt particular perſons, can equal the guilt of him who does injury to the public.

SECONDLY, All offenders againſt their country lie under this grievous difficulty, that it is next to impoſſible to obtain a pardon, or make reſtitution. The bulk of mankind are very quick at reſenting injuries, and very ſlow in forgiving them: And how ſhall one man be able to obtain the pardon of millions, or repair the

injuries he hath done to millions? How ſhall thoſe, who, by a moſt deſtructive fraud, got the whole wealth of our neighbouring kingdom into their hands, be ever able to make a recompence? How will the authors and promoters of that villainous project, for the ruin of this poor country, be able to account with us for the injuries they have already done, although they ſhould no farther proceed? The deplorable caſe of ſuch wretches, muſt entirely be left to the unfathomable mercies of God: For thoſe who know the leaſt in religion are not ignorant that, without our utmoſt endeavours to make reſtitution to the perſon injured, and to obtain his pardon, added to a ſincere repentance, there is no hope of ſalvation given in the Goſpel.

LASTLY,

LASTLY, All offences againſt our own country have this aggravation, that they are ungrateful and unnatural. It is to our country we owe thoſe laws which protect us in our lives, our liberties, our properties, and our religion. Our country produced us into the world, and continues to nouriſh us ſo, that it is uſually called our mother; and there have been examples of great magiſtrates who have put their own children to death for endeavouring to betray their own country, as if they had attempted the death of their natural parent.

THUS I have briefly ſhewn you how terrible a ſin it is to be an enemy to our country, in order to incite you to the contrary virtue, which at this juncture is ſo highly

neceſſary, when every man's endeavour will be of uſe. We have hitherto been juſt able to ſupport ourſelves under many hardſhips; but now the ax is laid to the root of the tree, and nothing but a firm union among us can prevent our utter undoing. This we are obliged to, in duty to our gracious king, as well as to ourſelves. Let us therefore preſerve that public ſpirit, which God hath raiſed in us for our own temporal intereſt. For, if this wicked project ſhould ſucceed, which it cannot but do by our own folly; if we ſell ourſelves for nought; the merchant, the ſhop-keeper, the artificer, muſt fly to the deſert with their miſerable families, there to ſtarve or live upon rapine, or at leaſt exchange their country for one more hoſpitable

hoſpitable than that where they were born.

THUS much I thought it my duty to ſay to you, who are under my care, to warn you againſt thoſe temporal evils, which may draw the worſt of ſpiritual evils after them; ſuch as heart-burnings, murmurings, diſcontents, and all manner of wickedneſs which a deſperate condition of life may tempt men to.

I am ſenſible that what I have now ſaid will not go very far, being confined to this aſſembly; but I hope it may ſtir up others of my brethren to exhort their ſeveral congregations, after a more effectual manner, to ſhew their love for their country on this important occaſion. And this, I am

ſure, cannot be called meddling in affairs of ſtate.

I pray God protect his moſt gracious Majeſty, and this kingdom, long under his government, and defend us from all ruinous projectors, deceivers, ſuborners, perjurers, falſe accuſers, and oppreſſors; from the virulence of party and faction; and unite us in loyalty to our king, love to our country, and charity to each other. And this we beg for Jeſus Chriſt his ſake: To whom, *&c.*

SER-

SERMON XI.

ON THE

EXCELLENCE OF

CHRISTIANITY,

IN OPPOSITION TO

HEATHEN-PHILOSOPHY.

SERMON XI.

1 Cor. iii. 19.

The wiſdom of this world is fooliſhneſs with God.

IT is remarkable that, about the time of our Saviour's coming into the world, all kinds of learning flouriſhed to a very great degree, inſomuch that nothing is more frequent in the mouths of many men, even ſuch who pretend to read and to know, than an extravagant praiſe and opinion of the wiſdom and virtue of the gentle ſages of thoſe days, and likewiſe of thoſe ancient philoſophers who went before them, whoſe doctrines

doctrines are left upon record either by themſelves or other writers. As far as this may be taken for granted, it may be ſaid, that the providence of God brought this about for ſeveral very wiſe ends and purpoſes. For, it is certain, that theſe philoſophers had been a long time before ſearching out where to fix the true happineſs of man; and, not being able to agree upon any certainty about it, they could not poſſibly but conclude, if they judged but impartially, that all their enquiries were, in the end, but vain and fruitleſs; the conſequence of which muſt be not only an acknowledgement of the weakneſs of all human wiſdom, but likewiſe an open paſſage hereby made, for the letting in thoſe beams of light, which the glorious ſunſhine of the goſpel then brought into the world,

by

by revealing thoſe hidden truths, which they had ſo long before been labouring to diſcover, and fixing the general happineſs of mankind beyond all controverſy and diſpute. And therefore the providence of God wiſely ſuffered men of deep genius and learning then to ariſe, who ſhould ſearch into the truth of the goſpel now made known, and canvaſs its doctrines with all the ſubtility and knowledge they were maſters of, and in the end freely acknowledge that to be the true wiſdom only which cometh from above. James iii. 15, 16, 17.

However, to make a further enquiry into the truth of this obſervation, I doubt not but there is reaſon to think that a great many of theſe encomiums given to ancient philoſophers

phers are taken upon truſt, and by a ſort of men who are not very likely to be at the pains of an enquiry that would employ ſo much time and thinking. For the uſual ends why men affect this kind of diſcourſe, appear generally to be either out of oſtentation, that they may paſs upon the world for perſons of great knowledge and obſervation; or, what is worſe, there are ſome who highly exalt the wiſdom of thoſe Gentile ſages, thereby obliquely to glance at and traduce divine revelation, and more eſpecially that of the goſpel; for the conſequence they would have us draw, is this: That, ſince thoſe antient philoſophers roſe to a greater pitch of wiſdom and virtue than was ever known among Chriſtians, and all this purely upon the ſtrength of their own reaſon and liberty of thinking,

ing, therefore it muſt follow, that either all revelation is falſe, or, what is worſe, that it has depraved the nature of man, and left him worſe than it found him.

But this high opinion of heathen wiſdom is not very antient in the world, nor at all countenanced from primitive times: Our Saviour had but a low eſteem of it, as appears by his treatment of the Phariſees and Sadducees, who followed the doctrines of Plato and Epicurus. St. Paul likewiſe, who was well verſed in all the Grecian literature, ſeems very much to deſpiſe their philoſophy, as we find in his writings, cautioning the Coloſſians to beware leſt any man ſpoil them through philoſophy and vain deceit. And, in another place, he adviſes Timothy to avoid prophane

and

and vain babblings, and oppoſitions of ſcience, falſely ſo called; that is, not to introduce into the Chriſtian doctrine the janglings of thoſe vain philoſophers, which they would paſs upon the world for ſcience. And the reaſons he gives are, firſt, That thoſe who profeſſed them did err concerning the faith: Secondly, Becauſe the knowledge of them did encreaſe ungodlineſs, vain babblings being otherways expounded vanities, or empty ſounds; that is, tedious diſputes about words, which the philoſophers were always ſo full of, and which were the natural product of diſputes and diſſentions between ſeveral ſects.

NEITHER had the primitive fathers any great or good opinion of the heathen philoſophy, as it is manifeſt from ſeveral paſſages in their writ-

ings:

ings: So that this vein of affecting to raiſe the reputation of thoſe ſages ſo high, is a mode and a vice but of yeſterday, aſſumed chiefly, as I have ſaid, to diſparage revealed knowledge, and the conſequences of it among us.

Now, becauſe this is a prejudice which may prevail with ſome perſons, ſo far as to leſſen the influence of the goſpel, and whereas therefore this is an opinion which men of education are like to be encountered with, when they have produced themſelves into the world: I ſhall endeavour to ſhew that their preference of heathen wiſdom and virtue, before that of the Chriſtian, is very unjuſt, and grounded upon ignorance or miſtake: In order to which I ſhall conſider four things.

FIRST,

FIRST, I ſhall produce certain points, wherein the wiſdom and virtue of all unrevealed philoſophy in general, fell ſhort, and was very imperfect.

SECONDLY, I ſhall ſhew, in ſeveral inſtances, where ſome of the moſt renowned philoſophers have been groſsly defective in their leſſons of morality.

THIRDLY, I ſhall prove the perfection of Chriſtian wiſdom, from the proper characters and marks of it.

LASTLY, I ſhall ſhew that the great examples of wiſdom and virtue among the heathen wiſe men, were produced by perſonal merit, and not influenced by the doctrine of any ſect;

ſect; whereas, in Chriſtianity, it is quite the contrary.

First, I ſhall produce certain points wherein the wiſdom and virtue of all unrevealed philoſophy in general fell ſhort, and was very imperfect.

My deſign is to perſuade men, that Chriſtian philoſophy is in all things preferable to heathen wiſdom; from which, or its profeſſors, I ſhall, however, have no occaſion to detract. They were as wiſe and as good as it was poſſible for them under ſuch diſadvantages, and would have probably been infinitely more with ſuch aids as we enjoy: But our leſſons are certainly much better, however our practices may fall ſhort.

The

THE firſt point I ſhall mention was that univerſal defect which was in all their ſchemes, that they could not agree about their chief good, or wherein to place the happineſs of mankind, nor had any of them a tolerable anſwer upon this difficulty, to ſatisfy a reaſonable perſon. For, to ſay, as the moſt plauſible of them did, that happineſs conſiſted in virtue, was but vain babbling, and a mere ſound of words, to amuſe others and themſelves; becauſe they were not agreed what this virtue was, or wherein it did conſiſt; and likewiſe, becauſe ſeveral among the beſt of them taught quite different things, placing happineſs in health or good fortune, in riches or in honour, where all were agreed that virtue was not, as I ſhall have occaſion to ſhew, when I ſpeak of their particular tenets.

THE

THE ſecond great defect in the Gentile philoſophy was, that it wanted ſome ſuitable reward proportioned to the better part of man, his mind, as an encouragement for his progreſs in virtue. The difficulties they met with upon the ſcore of this default were great, and not to be accounted for: Bodily goods being only ſuitable to bodily wants, are no reſt at all for the mind; and, if they were, yet are they not the proper fruits of wiſdom and virtue, being equally attainable by the ignorant and wicked. Now, human nature is ſo conſtituted, that we can never purſue any thing heartily but upon hopes of a reward. If we run a race, it is in expectation of a prize, and the greater the prize the faſter we run; for an incorruptible crown, if we underſtand it and believe it to be

ſuch, more than a corruptible one. But ſome of the philoſophers gave all this quite another turn, and pretended to refine ſo far, as to call virtue its own reward, and worthy to be followed only for itſelf: Whereas, if there be any thing in this more than the ſound of the words, it is at leaſt too abſtracted to become an univerſal influencing principle in the world, and therefore could not be of general uſe.

It was the want of aſſigning ſome happineſs, proportioned to the ſoul of man, that cauſed many of them, either on the one hand, to be ſour and moroſe, ſupercilious and untreatable; or, on the other, to fall into the vulgar purſuits of common men, to hunt after greatneſs and riches, to make their court, and to

ſerve

ſerve occaſions; as Plato did to the younger Dionyſius, and Ariſtotle to Alexander the Great. So impoſſible is it for a man, who looks no further than the preſent world, to fix himſelf long in a contemplation where the preſent world has no part: He has no ſure hold, no firm footing; he can never expect to remove the earth he reſts upon, while he has no ſupport beſide for his feet, but wants, like Archimedes, ſome other place whereon to ſtand. To talk of bearing pain and grief, without any ſort of preſent or future hope, cannot be purely greatneſs of ſpirit; there muſt be a mixture in it of affectation, and an allay of pride, or perhaps is wholly counterfeit.

It is true there has been all along in the world a notion of rewards and

puniſhments in another life; but it ſeems to have rather ſerved as an entertainment to poets, or as a terror of children, than a ſettled principle, by which men pretended to govern any of their actions. The laſt celebrated words of Socrates, a little before his death, do not ſeem to reckon or build much upon any ſuch opinion; and Cæſar made no ſcruple to diſown it, and ridicule it in open ſenate.

THIRDLY, The greateſt and wiſeſt of all their philoſophers were never able to give any ſatisfaction, to others and themſelves, in their notions of a Deity. They were often extremely groſs and abſurd in their conceptions; and thoſe who made the faireſt conjectures are ſuch as were generally allowed by the learned to have

have ſeen the ſyſtem of Moſes, if I may ſo call it, who was in great reputation at that time in the heathen world, as we find by Diodorus, Juſtin, Longinus, and other authors; for the reſt, the wiſeſt among them laid aſide all notions after a Deity, as a diſquiſition vain and fruitleſs, which indeed it was, upon unrevealed principles; and thoſe who ventured to engage too far fell into incoherence and confuſion.

FOURTHLY, Thoſe among them who had the juſteſt conceptions of a Divine Power, and did alſo admit a Providence, had no notion at all of entirely relying and depending upon either; they truſted in themſelves for all things: But, as for a truſt or dependence upon God, they would

not have underſtood the phraſe; it made no part of the profane ſtyle.

THEREFORE it was, that, in all iſſues and events, which they could not reconcile to their own ſentiments of reaſon and juſtice, they were quite diſconcerted: They had no retreat; but, upon every blow of adverſe fortune, either affected to be indifferent, or grew ſullen and ſevere, or elſe yielded and ſunk like other men.

HAVING now produced certain points, wherein the wiſdom and virtue of all unrevealed philoſophy fell ſhort, and was very imperfect; I go on, in the ſecond place, to ſhew in ſeveral inſtances, where ſome of the moſt renowned philoſophers have been groſsly defective in their leſſons of morality.

THALES,

THALES, the founder of the Ionic ſect, ſo celebrated for morality, being aſked how a man might bear ill-fortune with greateſt eaſe, anſwered, "By ſeeing his enemies in a worſe "condition." An anſwer truly barbarous, unworthy of human nature, and which included ſuch conſequences as muſt deſtroy all ſociety from the world.

SOLON, lamenting the death of a ſon, one told him, "You lament "in vain:" "Therefore (ſaid he) I "lament becauſe it is in vain." This was a plain confeſſion how imperfect all his philoſophy was, and that ſomething was ſtill wanting. He owned that all his wiſdom and morals were uſeleſs, and this upon one of the moſt frequent accidents in life. How much better could he have learned

to ſupport himſelf even from David, by his entire dependence upon God: and that before our Saviour had advanced the notions of religion to the height and perfection wherewith he hath inſtructed his diſciples? Plato himſelf, with all his refinements, placed happineſs in wiſdom, health, good fortune, honour, and riches; and held, that they who enjoyed all theſe were perfectly happy: Which opinion was indeed unworthy of its owner, leaving the wiſe and the good man wholly at the mercy of uncertain chance, and to be miſerable without reſource.

His ſcholar, Ariſtotle, fell more groſsly into the ſame notion; and plainly affirmed, That virtue, without the goods of fortune, was not ſufficient for happineſs, but that a wiſe

wiſe man muſt be miſerable in poverty and ſickneſs. Nay, Diogenes himſelf, from whoſe pride and ſingularity one would have looked for other notions, delivered it as his opinion, That a poor old man was the moſt miſerable thing in life.

ZENO alſo and his followers fell into many abſurdities, among which nothing could be greater than that of maintaining all crimes to be equal, which, inſtead of making vice hateful, rendered it as a thing indifferent and familiar to all men.

LASTLY, Epicurus had no notion of juſtice but as it was profitable; and his placing happineſs in pleaſure, with all the advantages he could expound it by, was liable to very great exceptions: For, although he taught

that pleaſure did conſiſt in virtue, yet he did not any way fix or aſcertain the boundaries of virtue, as he ought to have done; by which means he miſled his followers into the greateſt vices, making their names to become odious and ſcandalous, even in the Heathen world.

I HAVE produced theſe few inſtances from a great many others, to ſhew the imperfection of heathen philoſophy, wherein I have confined myſelf wholly to their morality. And ſurely we may pronounce upon it, in the words of St. James, that *this wiſdom deſcended not from above, but was earthly and ſenſual.* What if I had produced their abſurd notions about God and the ſoul? It would then have compleated the character given it by that Apoſtle, and appeared to have

have been deviliſh too. But it is eaſy to obſerve, from the nature of theſe few particulars, that their defects in morals were purely the flagging and fainting of the mind, for want of a ſupport by revelation from God.

I proceed therefore, in the third place, to ſhew the perfection of Chriſtian wiſdom from above, and I ſhall endeavour to make it appear from thoſe proper characters and marks of it by the Apoſtle before-mentioned, in the third chapter, and 15th, 16th, and 17th verſes.

The words run thus:

This wiſdom deſcendeth not from above, but is earthly, ſenſual, deviliſh.

For where envying and ſtrife is, there is confuſion, and every evil work.

But the wiſdom that is from above, is firſt pure, then peaceable, gentle, and eaſy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocriſy.

The wiſdom from above is firſt pure. This purity of the mind and ſpirit is peculiar to the goſpel. Our Saviour ſays, *Bleſſed are the pure in heart, for they ſhall ſee God.* A mind free from all pollution of luſts ſhall have a daily viſion of God, whereof unrevealed religion can form no notion. This is it which keeps us unſpotted from the world; and hereby many have been prevailed upon to live in the practice of all purity, holineſs and righteouſneſs,

teouſneſs, far beyond the examples of the moſt celebrated philoſophers.

It is *peaceable, gentle, and eaſy to be entreated.* The Chriſtian doctrine teacheth us all thoſe diſpoſitions that make us affable and courteous, gentle and kind, without any moroſe leaven of pride or vanity, which entered into the compoſition of moſt Heathen ſchemes: So we are taught to be meek and lowly. Our Saviour's laſt legacy was peace; and he commands us to forgive our offending brother unto ſeventy times ſeven. Chriſtian wiſdom is full of mercy and good works, teaching the height of all moral virtues, of which the heathens fall infinitely ſhort. Plato indeed (and it is worth obſerving) has ſomewhere a dialogue, or part of one, about forgiving our enemies, which

was

was perhaps the higheſt ſtrain ever reached by man, without divine aſſiſtance; yet how little is that to what our Saviour commands us? *To love them that hate us; to bleſs them that curſe us; and do good to them that deſpitefully uſe us.*

CHRISTIAN wiſdom is *without partiality*; it is not calculated for this or that nation or people, but the whole race of mankind: Not to the philoſophical ſchemes which were narrow and confined, adapted to their peculiar towns, governments, or ſects; but, in every nation, he that feareth God and worketh righteouſneſs is accepted with him.

LASTLY, It is *without hypocriſy*: It appears to be what it really is; it is all of a piece. By the doctrines of the

the goſpel we are ſo far from being allowed to publiſh to the world thoſe virtues we have not, that we are commanded to hide, even from ourſelves, thoſe we really have, and not to let our right hand know what our left hand does; unlike ſeveral branches of the Heathen wiſdom, which pretended to teach inſenſibility and indifference, magnanimity and contempt of life, while, at the ſame time, in other parts it belied its own doctrines.

I come now, in the laſt place, to ſhew that the great examples of wiſdom and virtue, among the Grecian ſages, were produced by perſonal merit, and not influenced by the doctrine of any particular ſect; whereas, in Chriſtianity it is quite the contrary.

THE

THE two virtues moſt celebrated by antient moraliſts were fortitude and temperance, as relating to the government of man in his private capacity, to which their ſchemes were generally addreſſed and confined; and the two inſtances, wherein thoſe virtues arrived at the greateſt height, were Socrates and Cato. But neither thoſe, nor any other virtues poſſeſſed by theſe two, were at all owing to any leſſons or doctrines of a ſect. For Socrates himſelf was of none at all; and although Cato was called a Stoic, it was more from a reſemblance of manners in his worſt qualities, than that he avowed himſelf one of their diſciples. The ſame may be affirmed of many other great men of antiquity. From whence I infer, that thoſe who were renowned for virtue among them, were more

obliged

obliged to the good natural diſpoſitions of their own minds, than to the doctrines of any ſect they pretended to follow.

On the other ſide, As the examples of fortitude and patience, among the primitive Chriſtians, have been infinitely greater and more numerous, ſo they were altogether the product of their principles and doctrine; and were ſuch as the ſame perſons, without thoſe aids, would never have arrived to. Of this truth moſt of the apoſtles, with many thouſand martyrs, are a cloud of witneſſes beyond exception. Having therefore ſpoken ſo largely upon the former heads, I ſhall dwell no longer upon this.

And, if it ſhould here be objected, Why does not Chriſtianity ſtill produce

produce the ſame effects? it is eaſy to anſwer, Firſt, That although the number of pretended Chriſtians be great, yet that of true believers, in proportion to the other, was never ſo ſmall; and it is a true lively faith alone, that by the aſſiſtance of God's grace, can influence our practice.

SECONDLY, we may anſwer, That Chriſtianity itſelf has very much ſuffered by being blended up with Gentile philoſophy. The Platonic ſyſtem, firſt taken into religion, was thought to have given matter for ſome early hereſies in the church. When diſputes began to ariſe, the Peripatetic forms were introduced by Scotus, as beſt fitted for controverſy. And, however this may now have become neceſſary, it was ſurely the author of a litigious vein, which

which has ſince occaſioned very pernicious conſequences, ſtopt the progreſs of Chriſtianity, and been a great promoter of vice, verifying that ſentence given by St. James, and mentioned before, *Where envying and ſtrife is, there is confuſion and every evil work.* This was the fatal ſtop to the Grecians, in their progreſs both of arts and arms: Their wiſe men were divided under ſeveral ſects, and their governments under ſeveral commonwealths, all in oppoſition to each other; which engaged them in eternal quarrels among themſelves, while they ſhould have been armed againſt the common enemy. And I wiſh we had no other examples from the like cauſes, leſs foreign or antient than that. Diogenes ſaid Socrates was a madman; the diſciples of Ze-

no and Epicurus, nay of Plato and Ariſtotle, were engaged in fierce diſputes about the moſt inſignificant trifles. And, if this be the preſent language and practice among us Chriſtians, no wonder that Chriſtianity does not ſtill produce the ſame effects which it did at firſt, when it was received and embraced in its utmoſt purity and perfection. For ſuch a wiſdom as this cannot *deſcend from above*, but muſt be *earthly, ſenſual, deviliſh; full of confuſion and every evil work:* Whereas *the wiſdom from above, is firſt pure, then peaceable, gentle, and eaſy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocriſy.* This is the true heavenly wiſdom, which Chriſtianity only can boaſt of, and which the greateſt of the

Heathen

Heathen wiſe men could never arrive at.

Now to God the Father, *&c. &c.*

6 MA 65

A

PROJECT

FOR THE

ADVANCEMENT of RELIGION,

AND THE

REFORMATION of MANNERS.

Written in the YEAR 1709.

TO THE

COUNTESS of BERKELEY.

MADAM,

MY intention in prefixing your Ladyſhip's name, is not after the common form, to deſire your protection of the following papers, which I take to be a very unreaſonable requeſt; ſince by being inſcribed to your Ladyſhip, although without your knowledge, and from a concealed hand, you cannot recommend them without ſome ſuſpicion of partiality. My real deſign is, I confeſs, the very ſame I have often deteſted in moſt dedications; that of publiſhing your praiſes to the world. Not upon the ſubject of your noble birth, for I know others as noble; or of the greatneſs of your fortune, for I know others far greater; or of that beautiful race (the images of

their parents) which calleth you mother: For even this may, perhaps, have been equalled in ſome other age, or country. Beſides, none of theſe advantages do derive any accompliſhments to the owners; but ſerve at beſt, only to adorn what they really poſſeſs. What I intend, is your piety, truth, good ſenſe and good nature, affability and charity; wherein I wiſh your Ladyſhip had many equals, or any ſuperiors; and I wiſh I could ſay, I knew them too; for then your Ladyſhip might have had a chance to eſcape this addreſs. In the mean time, I think it highly neceſſary for the intereſt of virtue and religion, that the whole kingdom ſhould be informed in ſome parts of your character: For inſtance: That, the eaſieſt and politeſt converſation, joined with the trueſt piety,

may

may be obſerved in your Ladyſhip, in as great perfection, as they were ever ſeen apart in any other perſons. That, by your prudence and management under ſeveral diſadvantages, you have preſerved the luſtre of that moſt noble family, into which you are grafted, and which the unmeaſurable profuſion of anceſtors, for many generations, had too much eclipſed. Then, how happily you perform every office of life, to which providence hath called you: In the education of thoſe two incomparable daughters, whoſe conduct is ſo univerſally admired; in every duty of a prudent, complying, affectionate wife; in that care which deſcendeth to the meaneſt of your domeſticks; and laſtly, in that endleſs bounty to the poor, and diſcretion where to diſtribute it. I inſiſt on my opinion, that

it is of importance to the publick to know this, and a great deal more of your Ladyſhip; yet whoever goeth about to inform them, ſhall, inſtead of finding credit, perhaps be cenſured for a flatterer. To avoid ſo uſual a reproach, I declare this to be no dedication; but merely an introduction to a propoſal for the advancement of religion and morals; by tracing, however imperfectly, ſome few lineaments in the character of a Lady, who hath ſpent all her life in the practice and promotion of both.

A

PROJECT

FOR THE

ADVANCEMENT of RELIGION,

AND THE

REFORMATION of MANNERS.

AMONG all the ſchemes offered to the public in this projecting age, I have obſerved, with ſome diſpleaſure, that there have never been

any for the improvement of religion and morals: Which, beſides the piety of the deſign from the conſequences of ſuch a reformation in a future life, would be the beſt natural means for advancing the public felicity of the ſtate, as well as the preſent happineſs of every individual. For, as much as faith and morality are declined among us, I am altogether confident, they might, in a ſhort time, and with no very great trouble, be raiſed to as high a perfection, as numbers are capable of receiving. Indeed, the method is ſo eaſy and obvious, and ſome preſent opportunities ſo good; that, in order to have this project reduced to practice, there ſeemeth to want nothing more than to put thoſe in mind, who, by their honour, duty, and intereſt, are chiefly concerned.

But, becauſe it is idle to propoſe remedies before we are aſſured of the diſeaſe, or to be in fear, until we are convinced of the danger; I ſhall firſt ſhew in general, that the nation is extremely corrupted in religion and morals; and then, I will offer a ſhort ſcheme for the reformation of both.

As to the firſt; I know it is reckoned but a form of ſpeech, when divines complain of the wickedneſs of the age: However, I believe, upon a fair compariſon with the other times and countries, it would be found an undoubted truth.

For, firſt, to deliver nothing but plain matter of fact, without exaggeration or ſatire, I ſuppoſe it will be granted, that hardly one in a

hundred among our people of quality, or gentry, appeareth to act by any principle of religion. That great numbers of them do entirely diſcard it, and are ready to own their diſbelief of all revelation in ordinary diſcourſe. Nor is the caſe much better among the vulgar, eſpecially in great towns, where the profaneneſs and ignorance of handicraftſmen, ſmall traders, ſervants, and the like, are to a degree very hard to be imagined greater. Then, it is obſerved abroad, that no race of mortals hath ſo little ſenſe of religion as the *Engliſh* ſoldiers: To confirm which, I have been often told by great officers in the army, that in the whole compaſs of their acquaintance, they could not recollect three of their profeſſion, who ſeemed to regard, or believe one ſyllable of the goſpel:

And

And the ſame, at leaſt, may be affirmed of the fleet. The conſequences of all which, upon the actions of men, are equally manifeſt. They never go about, as in former times, to hide or palliate their vices; but expoſe them freely to view, like any other common occurrences of life, without the leaſt reproach from the world, or themſelves. For inſtance, any man will tell you, he intendeth to be drunk this evening, or was ſo laſt night, with as little ceremony or ſcruple, as he would tell you the time of the day. He will let you know he is going to a wench, or that he hath got a clap, with as much indifferency as he would a piece of public news: He will ſwear, curſe, or blaſpheme, without the leaſt paſſion or provocation. And although

all regard for reputation be not quite laid aſide in the other ſex; it is, however, at ſo low an ebb, that very few among them, ſeem to think virtue and conduct of any neceſſity for preſerving it. If this be not ſo, how cometh it to paſs, that women of tainted reputations find the ſame countenance, and reception in all public places, with thoſe of the niceſt virtue, who pay and receive viſits from them, without any manner of ſcruple? Which proceeding, as it is not very old among us, ſo I take it to be of moſt pernicious conſequence. It looketh like a ſort of compounding between virtue and vice; as if a woman were allowed to be vicious, provided ſhe be not profligate: As if there were a certain point where gallantry endeth, and infamy beginneth; or that an hundred criminal amours

amours were not as pardonable as half a-ſcore.

BESIDE thoſe corruptions already mentioned, it would be endleſs to enumerate ſuch as ariſe from the exceſs of play, or gaming: The cheats, the quarrels, the oaths and blaſphemies among the men: Among the women, the neglect of houſhold affairs, the unlimited freedoms, the undecent paſſion; and, laſtly the known inlet to all lewdneſs, when after an ill run, the *perſon* muſt anſwer the defects of the *purſe:* The rule on ſuch occaſions, holding true in play, as it doth in law; *Quod non habet in crumena, luat in corpore.*

BUT all theſe are trifles in compariſon, if we ſtep into other ſcenes, and conſider the fraud and cozenage of trad-

ing men and ſhopkeepers: That inſatiable gulph of injuſtice and oppreſſion the *law*. The open traffic of all civil and military employments (I wiſh it reſted there) without the leaſt regard to merit or qualifications: The corrupt management of men in office: The many deteſtable abuſes in chuſing thoſe, who repreſent the people; with the management of intereſt and factions among the repreſentatives: To which I muſt be bold to add the ignorance among ſome of the lower clergy; the mean ſervile temper of others; the pert pragmatical demeanor of ſeveral young ſtagers in divinity, upon their firſt producing themſelves into the world. With many other circumſtances needleſs, or rather invidious to mention; which falling in with the corruptions already related, have, however unjuſtly,

juſtly, almoſt rendered the whole order contemptible.

THIS is a very ſhort view of the general depravities among us without entering into particulars, which would be an endleſs labour. Now, as univerſal and deep rooted as theſe corruptions appear to be, I am utterly deceived, if an effectual remedy might not be applied to moſt of them; neither am I at preſent upon a wild ſpeculative project, but ſuch a one as may be eaſily put in execution.

FOR, while the prerogative of giving all employments continueth in the crown, either immediately or by ſubordination; it is in the power of the *Prince* to make piety and virtue become the faſhion of the age; if at the ſame time he would make them neceſſary

neceſſary qualifications for favour and preferment.

It is clear from preſent experience, that the bare example of the beſt prince, will not have any mighty influence where the age is very corrupt. For, when was there ever a better prince on the throne than the preſent Queen? I do not talk of her talent for government, her love of the people, or any other qualities that are purely regal; but her piety, charity, temperance, conjugal love, and whatever other virtues do beſt adorn a private life; wherein, without queſtion, or flattery, ſhe hath no ſuperior: Yet neither will it be ſatire or peeviſh invective to affirm, that infidelity and vice are not much diminiſhed ſince her coming to the crown, nor will, in probability, until

til more effectual remedies be provided.

THUS human nature ſeemeth to lie under this diſadvantage, that the example alone of a vicious prince, will in time corrupt an age; but the example of a good one will not be ſufficient to reform it without further endeavours. Princes muſt therefore ſupply this defect by a vigorous exerciſe of that authority, which the law hath left them, by making it every man's intereſt and honour to cultivate religion and virtue; by rendering vice a diſgrace, and the certain ruin to preferment or pretenſions: All which they ſhould firſt attempt in their own courts and families. For inſtance, might not the Queen's domeſticks of the middle and lower ſort, be obliged upon penalty of

of ſuſpenſion or loſs of their employments, to a conſtant weekly attendance on the ſervice of the church; to a decent behaviour in it; to receive the ſacrament four times a-year; to avoid ſwearing and irreligious profane diſcourſes; and to the appearance at leaſt of temperance and chaſtity? Might not the care of all this be committed to the ſtrict inſpection of proper officers? Might not thoſe of higher rank, and nearer acceſs to her Majeſty, receive her own commands to the ſame purpoſe, and be countenanced or disfavoured according as they obey? Might not the Queen lay her injunctions on the biſhops and other great men of undoubted piety, to make diligent inquiry, and give her notice, whether any perſon about her ſhould happen to be of libertine principles or morals?

rals? Might not all thoſe who enter upon any office in her Majeſty's family, be obliged to take an oath parallel with that againſt *ſymony*, which is adminiſtered to the clergy? It is not to be doubted, but that if theſe or the like proceedings, were duly obſerved, morality and religion would ſoon become faſhionable court-virtues; and be taken up as the only methods to get or keep employments there: which alone would have a mighty influence upon many of the nobility, and principal gentry.

But, if the like methods were purſued as far as poſſible, with regard to thoſe who are in the great employments of the ſtate; it is hard to conceive how general a reformation they might in time produce among us. For, if piety and virtue were

were once reckoned qualifications neceſſary to preferment; every man thus endued, when put into great ſtations, would readily imitate the Queen's example, in the diſtribution of all offices in his diſpoſal; eſpecially if any apparent tranſgreſſion thro' favour or partiality, would be imputed to him for a miſdemeanour, by which he muſt certainly forfeit his favour and ſtation: And there being ſuch great numbers in employment, ſcattered through every town and country in this kingdom; if all theſe were exemplary in the conduct of their lives, things would ſoon take a new face, and religion receive a mighty encouragement: Nor would the public weal be leſs advanced; ſince of nine offices in ten that are ill executed, the defect is not in capacity or underſtanding, but in common honeſty.

honeſty. I know no employment for which piety diſqualifieth any man; and if it did, I doubt, the objection would not be very ſeaſonably offered at preſent: Becauſe, it is perhaps too juſt a reflexion, that in the diſpoſal of places, the queſtion whether a perſon be *fit* for what he is recommended to, is generally the laſt that is thought on, or regarded.

I have often imagined, that ſomething parallel to the office of cenſors antiently in *Rome*, would be of mighty uſe among us; and could be eaſily limited from running into any exorbitancies. The *Romans* underſtood liberty at leaſt as well as we; were as jealous of it, and upon every occaſion as bold aſſertors: Yet, I do not remember to have read any great complaints of the abuſes in that office

fice among them; but many admirable effects of it are left upon record. There are ſeveral pernicious vices frequent and notorious among us, that eſcape or elude the puniſhment of any law we have yet invented, or have had no law at all againſt them; ſuch as atheiſm, drunkenneſs, fraud, avarice, and ſeveral others; which by this inſtitution wiſely regulated, might be much reformed. Suppoſe, for inſtance, that itinerary commiſſioners were appointed to inſpect every where throughout the kingdom, into the conduct (at leaſt) of men in office, with reſpect to their morals and religion, as well as their abilities; to receive the complaints and informations that ſhould be offered againſt them; and make their report here upon oath, to the court or the miniſtry, who ſhould reward or puniſh accordingly.

accordingly. I avoid entering into the particulars of this or or any other ſcheme, which coming from a private hand, might be liable to many defects, but would ſoon be digeſted by the wiſdom of the nation: And ſurely, ſix thouſand pounds a year would not be ill laid out among as many commiſſioners duly qualified; who in three diviſions ſhould be perſonally obliged to take their yearly circuits for that purpoſe.

But, this is beſide my preſent deſign, which was only to ſhew what degree of reformation is in the power of the Queen, without the interpoſition of the legiſlature; and which her Majeſty is without queſtion obliged in conſcience to endeavour by her authority, as much as ſhe doth by her practice.

It will be eaſily granted, that the example of this great town hath a mighty influence over the whole kingdom; and it is as manifeſt, that the town is equally influenced by the Court and the Miniſtry, and thoſe, who by their employments or their hopes, depend upon them. Now, if under ſo excellent a princeſs, as the preſent Queen, we would ſuppoſe a family ſtrictly regulated, as I have above propoſed; a miniſtry, where every ſingle perſon was of diſtinguiſhed piety; if we ſhould ſuppoſe all great offices of ſtate and law filled after the ſame manner, and with ſuch as were equally diligent in chuſing perſons, who in their ſeveral ſubordinations would be obliged to follow the examples of their ſuperiors, under the penalty of loſs of favour and place; will not every body grant, that

the

the empire of vice and irreligion would ſoon be deſtroyed in this great metropolis, and receive a terrible blow through the whole iſland, which hath ſo great an intercourſe with it, and ſo much affecteth to follow its faſhions.

For, if religion were once underſtood to be the neceſſary ſtep to favour and preferment; can it be imagined, that any man would openly offend againſt it, who had the leaſt regard for his reputation or his fortune? There is no quality ſo contrary to any nature, which men cannot effect, and put on upon occaſion, in order to ſerve an intereſt, or gratify a prevailing paſſion: The proudeſt man will perſonate humility, the moroſeſt learn to flatter, the lazieſt will be ſedulous and active, where he

he is in purſuit of what he hath much at heart: How ready therefore would moſt men be to ſtep into the paths of virtue and piety, if they infallibly led to favour and fortune.

If ſwearing and profaneneſs, ſcandalous and avowed lewdneſs, exceſſive gaming and intemperance were a little diſcountenanced in the army, I cannot readily ſee what ill conſequences could be apprehended: If gentlemen of that profeſſion were at leaſt obliged to ſome external decorum in their conduct; or even if a profligate life and character were not a means of advancement, and the appearance of piety a moſt infallible hinderance; it is impoſſible the corruptions there ſhould be ſo univerſal and exorbitant. I have been aſſured by ſeveral great officers, that no troops

troops abroad are ſo ill diſciplined as the *Engliſh*; which cannot well be otherwiſe, while the common ſoldiers have perpetually before their eyes the vicious example of their leaders: And it is hardly poſſible for thoſe to commit any crime, whereof theſe are not infinitely more guilty, and with leſs temptation.

It is commonly charged upon the gentlemen of the army, that the beaſtly vice of drinking to exceſs, hath been lately from their example reſtored among us; which for ſome years before was almoſt dropt in *England*. But whoever the introducers were, they have ſucceeded to a miracle; many of the young nobility and gentry are already become great proficients, and are under no manner of concern to hide their talent; but are

got beyond all ſenſe of ſhame, or fear of reproach.

THIS might ſoon be remedied, if the Queen would think fit to declare, that no young perſon of quality whatever, who was notoriouſly addicted to that or any other vice, ſhould be capable of her favour, or even admitted into her preſence; with poſitive command to her miniſters and others in great office, to treat them in the ſame manner; after which, all men, who had any regard for their reputation, or any proſpect of preferment, would avoid their commerce. This would quickly make that vice ſo ſcandalous, that thoſe, who could not ſubdue, would at leaſt endeavour to diſguiſe it.

BY the like methods, a ſtop might be

be put to that ruinous practice of deep gaming: And the reaſon why it prevaileth ſo much, is, becauſe a treatment *directly oppoſite* in every point, is made uſe of to promote it; by which means the laws enacted againſt this abuſe are wholly eluded.

It cannot be denied, that the want of ſtrict diſcipline in the univerſities, hath been of pernicious conſequence to the youth of this nation, who are there almoſt left entirely to their own management; eſpecially thoſe among them of better quality and fortune; who, becauſe they are not under a neceſſity of making learning their maintenance, are eaſily allowed to paſs their time, and take their degrees with little or no improvement: Than which, there cannot well be a greater abſurdity, For,

if no advancement of knowledge can be had from thoſe places, the time there ſpent is at beſt utterly loſt, becauſe every ornamental part of education is better taught elſewhere: And as for keeping youths out of harm's way, I doubt where ſo many of them are got together, at full liberty of doing what they pleaſe, it will not anſwer the end. But, whatever abuſes, corruptions, or deviations from ſtatutes have crept into the univerſities, through neglect, or length of time; they might in a great degree be reformed by ſtrict injunctions from court, (upon each particular, to the viſitors and heads of houſes); beſides the peculiar authority the Queen may have in ſeveral colleges, whereof her predeceſſors were the founders. And among other regulations, it would be very convenient

convenient to prevent the exceſs of drinking, with that ſcurvy cuſtom among the lads, and parent of the former vice, the taking of tobacco, where it is not abſolutely neceſſary in point of health.

FROM the univerſities, the young nobility, and others of great fortunes are ſent for early up to town, for fear of contracting any airs of pedantry by a college education. Many of the younger gentry retire to the inns-of-court, where they are wholly left to their own diſcretion. And the conſequence of this remiſſneſs in education, appeareth by obſerving, that nine in ten of thoſe, who riſe in the church, or the court, the law or the army, are younger brothers, or new men, whoſe narrow fortunes

have forced them upon induſtry and application.

As for the inns-of-court, unleſs we ſuppoſe them to be much degenerated, they muſt needs be the worſt inſtituted ſeminaries in any Chriſtian country; but whether they may be corrected without the interpoſition of the legiſlature, I have not ſkill enough to determine. However, it is certain, that all wiſe nations have agreed in the neceſſity of a ſtrict education; which conſiſted, among other things, in the obſervance of moral duties, eſpecially juſtice, temperance, and chaſtity, as well as the knowledge of arts, and bodily exerciſes: But all theſe among us, are laughed out of doors.

WITHOUT the leaſt intention to offend

ſend the clergy, I cannot but think, that, through a miſtaken notion and practice, they prevent themſelves from doing much ſervice, which otherwiſe might lie in their power, to religion and virtue: I mean, by affecting ſo much to converſe with each other, and caring ſo little to mingle with the laity. They have their particular clubs, and particular coffee-houſes where they generally appear in cluſters: A ſingle divine dareth hardly ſhew his perſon among numbers of fine gentlemen; or if he happen to fall into ſuch company, he is ſilent and ſuſpicious; in continual apprehenſion, that ſome pert man of pleaſure ſhould break an unmannerly jeſt, and render him ridiculous. Now I take this behaviour of the clergy to be juſt as reaſonable, as if the phyſicians ſhould agree to ſpend

their time in viſiting one another, or their ſeveral apothecaries, and leave their patients to ſhift for themſelves. In my humble opinion, the clergy's buſineſs lieth entirely among the laity; neither is there, perhaps, a more effectual way to forward the ſalvation of men's ſouls, than for ſpiritual perſons to make themſelves as agreeable as they can, in the converſation of the world; for which a learned education gives them great advantage, if they would pleaſe to improve and apply it. It ſo happens, that the *men of pleaſure*, who never go to church, nor amuſe themſelves to read books of devotion, form their ideas of the clergy, from a few poor ſtrollers they often obſerve in the ſtreets, or ſneaking out of ſome perſon of quality's houſe, where they are hired by the Lady at ten ſhillings a month; while

thoſe of better figure and parts do ſeldom appear to correct theſe notions. And let ſome reaſoners think what they pleaſe; it is certain, that men muſt be brought to eſteem and love the clergy, before they can be perſuaded to be in love with religion. No man values the beſt medicines, if adminiſtred by a phyſician, whoſe perſon he hateth or deſpiſeth. If the clergy were as forward to appear in all companies, as other gentlemen, and would a little ſtudy the arts of converſation, to make themſelves agreeable, they might be welcome at every party, where there was the leaſt regard for politeneſs, or good ſenſe; and conſequently prevent a thouſand vicious or profane diſcourſes, as well as actions: Neither would men of underſtanding complain, that a clergyman was

a conſtraint upon the company; becauſe they could not ſpeak blaſphemy, or obſcene jeſts before him. While the people are ſo jealous of the clergy's ambition, as to abhor all thoughts of the return of eccleſiaſtic diſcipline among them; I do not ſee any other method left for men of that function to take, in order to reform the world, than by uſing all honeſt arts to make themſelves acceptable to the laity. This, no doubt, is part of that wiſdom of the ſerpent, which the Author of Chriſtianity directeth; and is the very method uſed by St. *Paul*, who *became all things to all men, to the* Jews *a* Jew, *and a* Greek *to the* Greeks.

How to remedy theſe inconveniencies, may be a matter of ſome difficulty; ſince the clergy ſeem to be of

of an opinion, that this humour of ſequeſtring themſelves is a part of their duty; nay, as I remember, they have been told by ſome of their Biſhops in their paſtoral letters, particularly by * *one* among them, who yet, in his own practice, hath all his lifetime, taken a courſe directly contrary. But I am deceived, if an aukward ſhame, and fear of ill uſage from the laity, have not a greater ſhare in this miſtaken conduct, than their own inclinations: However, if the outward profeſſion of religion and virtue, were once in practice and countenance at court, as well as among all men in office, or who have any hopes or dependence for preferment; a good treatment of the clergy would be the neceſſary conſequence

* Suppoſed to be Dr. Burnet, Biſhop of Saliſbury.

of ſuch a reformation: and they would ſoon be wiſe enough to ſee their own duty and intereſt, in qualifying themſelves for lay-converſation, when once they were out of fear of being choaked by ribaldry, or profaneneſs.

THERE is one further circumſtance upon this occaſion, which I know not whether it will be very orthodox to mention: The clergy are the only ſet of men among us, who conſtantly wear a diſtinct habit from others: The conſequence of which (not in reaſon, but in fact) is this, that as long as any ſcandalous perſons appear in that dreſs, it will continue, in ſome degree, a general mark of contempt. Whoever happens to ſee a *ſcoundrel in a gown*, reeling home at midnight, (a ſight neither *frequent* nor

nor *miraculous*) is apt to entertain an ill idea of the whole order; and, at the ſame time, to be extremely comforted in his own vices. Some remedy might be put to this, if thoſe ſtraggling gentlemen, who come up to town to *ſeek their fortunes*, were fairly diſmiſſed to the Weſt Indies; where there is work enough, and where ſome better proviſion ſhould be made for them, than I doubt there is at preſent. Or, what if no perſon were allowed to wear the habit, who had not ſome preferment in the church; or, at leaſt, ſome temporal fortune ſufficient to keep him out of contempt.

THERE is one abuſe in this town, which wonderfully contributeth to the promotion of vice; when ſuch men are often put into the commiſſion

ſion of the peace, whoſe intereſt it is, that virtue ſhould be utterly baniſhed from among us; who maintain, or at leaſt enrich themſelves by encouraging the groſſeſt immoralities; to whom all the *bawds* of the *ward* pay contribution for ſhelter and protection from the laws. Thus, theſe worthy magiſtrates, inſtead of leſſening enormities, are the occaſion of juſt twice as much debauchery as there would be without them. For thoſe infamous women are forced upon doubling their work and induſtry, to anſwer double charges, of paying the juſtice, and ſupporting themſelves: Like thieves who eſcape the gallows, and are let out to ſteal, in order to diſcharge the goaler's fees.

It is not to be queſtioned, but the

Queen

Queen and miniſtry might eaſily redreſs this abominable grievance, by enlarging the number of juſtices of the peace; by endeavouring to chuſe men of virtuous principles; by admitting none, who have not conſiderable fortunes; perhaps by receiving into the number ſome of the moſt eminent clergy: Then, by forcing all of them, upon ſevere penalties, to act when there is occaſion; and not permitting any, who are offered, to refuſe the commiſſion. But in theſe two laſt caſes, which are very material, I doubt there would be need of the legiſlature.

THE reformation of the ſtage is entirely in the power of the Queen; and, in the conſequences it hath upon the minds of younger people, doth very well deſerve the ſtricteſt care.

care. Beſide the undecent and profane paſſages; beſide the perpetual turning into ridicule the very function of the prieſthood; with other irregularities in moſt modern comedies, which have been often objected to them; it is worth obſerving the diſtributive juſtice of the authors, which is conſtantly applied to the puniſhment of virtue, and the reward of vice; directly oppoſite to the rules of their beſt criticks, as well as to the practice of dramatick poets in all other ages and countries. For example, a country-ſquire, who is repreſented with no other vice but that of being a clown, and having the provincial accent upon his tongue, which is neither a fault, nor in his power to remedy, muſt be condemned to marry a caſt wench, or a cracked chambermaid. On the other

ther ſide, a rakehell of the town, whoſe character is ſet off with no other accompliſhments but extenſive prodigality, profaneneſs, intemperance, and luſt; is rewarded with the lady of great fortune, to repair his own, which his vices had almoſt ruined. And, as in a tragedy, the hero is repreſented to have obtained many victories, in order to raiſe his character in the minds of the ſpectators; ſo the hero of a comedy is repreſented to have been victorious in all his intrigues for the ſame reaſon. I do not remember that our Engliſh poets ever ſuffered a criminal amour to ſucceed upon the ſtage, until the reign of King Charles the Second. Ever ſince that time, the alderman is made a cuckold, the deluded virgin is debauched; and adultery and fornication are ſuppoſed to be committed

ted behind the ſcenes, as part of the action. Theſe, and many more corruptions of the theatre, peculiar to our age and nation, need continue no longer than while the court is content to connive at, or neglect them. Surely a penſion would not be ill employed on ſome men of wit, learning, and virtue, who might have power to ſtrike out every offenſive, or unbecoming paſſage from plays already written, as well as thoſe that may be offered to the ſtage for the future. By which, and other wiſe regulations, the theatre might become a very innocent and uſeful diverſion, inſtead of being a ſcandal and reproach to our religion and country.

THE propoſals I have hitherto made, for the advancement of religion and morality, are ſuch, as come within

within the reach of the adminiſtration; ſuch as a pious active prince, with a ſteady reſolution, might ſoon bring to effect. Neither am I aware of any objections to be raiſed againſt what I have advanced; unleſs it ſhould be thought, that the making religion a neceſſary ſtep to intereſt and favour, might increaſe hypocriſy among us: And, I readily believe it would. But, if one in twenty ſhould be brought over to true piety by this, or the like methods, and the other nineteen be only hypocrites, the advantages would ſtill be great. Beſides, hypocriſy is much more eligible than open infidelity and vice: It wears the livery of religion, it acknowledgeth her authority, and is cautious of giving ſcandal. Nay, a long continued diſguiſe is too great a conſtraint upon human nature, eſpecially

ſpecially an Engliſh diſpoſition. Men would leave off their vices out of mere wearineſs, rather than undergo the toil and hazard, and perhaps expence of practiſing them perpetually in private. And, I believe, it is often with religion as it is with love; which, by much diſſembling, at laſt groweth real.

ALL other projects to this great end, have proved hitherto ineffectual. Laws againſt immorality have not been executed; and proclamations occaſionally iſſued out to enforce them, are wholly unregarded as things of form. Religious ſocieties, although begun with excellent intention, and by perſons of true piety, are ſaid, I know not whether truly or no, to have dwindled into factious clubs, and grown a trade to enrich

enrich little knaviſh informers of the meaneſt rank, ſuch as common conſtables, and broken ſhopkeepers.

And that ſome effectual attempt ſhould be made towards ſuch a reformation, is perhaps more neceſſary, than people commonly apprehend; becauſe the ruin of a ſtate is generally preceded by an univerſal degeneracy of manners, and contempt of religion; which is entirely our caſe at preſent.

Diis te minorem quod geris, imperas.

Neither is this a matter to be deferred until a more convenient time of peace and leiſure: A reformation in men's faith and morals, is the beſt natural, as well as religious means to bring the war to a good concluſion.

ſion. Becauſe, if men in truſt performed their duty for conſcience ſake, affairs would not ſuffer through fraud, falſehood, and neglect, as they now perpetually do: And if they believed a God and his providence, and acted accordingly, they might reaſonably hope for his divine aſſiſtance in ſo juſt a cauſe as ours.

Nor could the majeſty of the Engliſh crown appear, upon any occaſion, in a greater luſtre, either to foreigners, or ſubjects, than by an adminiſtration, which producing ſuch good effects, would diſcover ſo much power. And power being the natural appetite of princes; a limited monarch cannot ſo well gratify it in any point, as a ſtrict execution of the laws.

Besides,

BESIDES, all parties would be obliged to cloſe with ſo good a work as this, for their own reputation: Neither is any expedient more likely to unite them. For, the moſt violent party-men I have ever obſerved, are ſuch as in the conduct of their lives have diſcovered leaſt ſenſe of religion, or morality; and, when all ſuch are laid aſide, at leaſt, thoſe among them who ſhall be found incorrigible, it will be a matter, perhaps, of no great difficulty to reconcile the reſt.

THE many corruptions, at preſent, in every branch of buſineſs, are almoſt inconceivable. I have heard it computed by ſkilful perſons, that, of ſix millions raiſed every year for the ſervice of the publick, one third, at leaſt, is ſunk and intercepted through the

the ſeveral claſſes and ſubordinations of artful men in office, before the remainder is applied to the proper uſe. This is an accidental ill effect of our freedom: And while ſuch men are in truſt, who have no check from within, nor any views but towards their intereſt; there is no other fence againſt them, but the certainty of being hanged upon the firſt diſcovery, by the arbitrary will of an unlimited monarch, or his vizier. Among us, the only danger to be apprehended, is the loſs of an employment; and that danger is to be eluded a thouſand ways. Beſides, when fraud is great, it furniſheth weapons to defend itſelf: And, at worſt, if the crimes be ſo flagrant, that a man is laid aſide out of perfect ſhame (which rarely happeneth) he retireth loaded with the ſpoils of the nation;

nation; *Et fruitur diis iratis.* I could name a commiſſion, where ſeveral perſons out of a ſalary of five hundred pounds, without other viſible revenues, have always lived at the rate of two thouſand, and laid out forty or fifty thouſand upon purchaſes of land, or annuities. An hundred other inſtances of the ſame kind might eaſily be produced. What remedy, therefore, can be found againſt ſuch grievances, in a conſtitution like ours, but to bring religion into countenance, and encourage thoſe, who, from the hope of future reward, and dread of future puniſhment, will be moved to act with juſtice and integrity?

THIS is not to be accompliſhed any other way than by introducing religion, as much as poſſible, to be

the turn and faſhion of the age; which only lieth in the power of the adminiſtration; the prince with the utmoſt ſtrictneſs regulating the court, the miniſtry, and other perſons in great employment; and theſe, by their example and authority, reforming all who have dependence on them.

It is certain, that a reformation, ſucceſsfully carried on in this great town, would, in time, ſpread itſelf over the whole kingdom; ſince moſt of the conſiderable youth paſſeth here that ſeaſon of their lives, wherein the ſtrongeſt impreſſions are made, in order to improve their education, or advance their fortune: And thoſe among them who return into their ſeveral countries, are ſure to be followed and imitated, as the greateſt

greateſt patterns of wit and good breeding.

AND if things were once in this train; that is, if virtue and religion were eſtabliſhed as the neceſſary titles to reputation and preferment; and if vice and infidelity were not only loaded with infamy, but made the infallible ruin of all men's pretenſions; our duty, by becoming our intereſt, would take root in our natures, and mix with the very genius of our people; ſo that it would not be eaſy for the example of one wicked prince, to bring us back to our former corruptions.

I HAVE confined myſelf (as it is before obſerved) to thoſe methods for the advancement of piety, which are in the power of a Prince limited

like ours, by a ſtrict execution of the laws already in force. And this is enough for a project that cometh without any name, or recommendation; I doubt, a great deal more than will ſuddenly be reduced into practice. Although, if any diſpoſition ſhould appear towards ſo good a work, it is certain, that the aſſiſtance of the legiſlative power would be neceſſary to make it more compleat. I will inſtance only in a few particulars.

In order to reform the vices of this town, which, as we have ſaid, hath ſo mighty an influence on the whole kingdom, it would be very inſtrumental to have a law made, that all taverns, or alehouſes, ſhould be obliged to diſmiſs their company by twelve at night, and ſhut up their doors;

doors; and that no woman ſhould be ſuffered to enter any tavern or alehouſe upon any pretence whatever. It is eaſy to conceive, what a number of ill conſequences ſuch a law would prevent; the miſchiefs of quarrels, and lewdneſs, and thefts, and midnight brawls, the diſeaſes of intemperance and venery; and a thouſand other evils needleſs to mention. Nor would it be amiſs, if the maſters of thoſe publick houſes were obliged, upon the ſevereſt penalties, to give only a proportioned quantity of drink to every company; and when he found his gueſts diſordered with exceſs, to refuſe them any more.

I BELIEVE there is hardly a nation in Chriſtendom, where all kind of fraud is practiſed in ſo unmeaſurable a degree as with us. The lawyer,

the tradeſman, the mechanick, have found ſo many arts to deceive in their ſeveral callings, that they far outgrow the common prudence of mankind, which is in no ſort able to fence againſt them. Neither could the legiſlature, in any thing, more conſult the public good, than by providing ſome effectual remedy againſt this evil; which, in ſeveral caſes, deſerveth greater puniſhment than many crimes that are capital among us. The vintner, who, by mixing poiſon with his wines, deſtroyeth more lives, than any malignant diſeaſe: The lawyer, who perſuadeth you to a purchaſe, which he knoweth is mortgaged for more than the worth, to the ruin of you and your family: The banquier or ſcrivener, who taketh all your fortune to diſpoſe of, when he hath beforehand reſolved to break

break the following day; doth ſurely deſerve the gallows much better than the wretch, who is carried thither for ſtealing a horſe.

It cannot eaſily be anſwered to God or man, why a law is not made for limiting the preſs; at leaſt ſo far as to prevent the publiſhing of ſuch pernicious books, as under pretence of *free-thinking*, endeavour to overthrow thoſe tenets in religion, which have been held inviolable almoſt in all ages, by every ſect that pretendeth to be Chriſtian; and cannot therefore, with any colour of reaſon, be called *points in controverſy*, or *matters of ſpeculation*, as ſome would pretend. The doctrine of the *Trinity*, the *divinity of Chriſt*, the *immortality of the ſoul*, and even the truth of all revelation are daily exploded and denied

nied in books openly printed; although it is to be ſuppoſed, that neither party avow ſuch principles, or own the ſupporting of them to be any way neceſſary to their ſervice.

It would be endleſs to ſet down every corruption or defect, which requireth a remedy from the legiſlative power. Senates are like to have little regard for any propoſals that come from *without doors*: Although under a due ſenſe of my own inabilities, I am fully convinced that the unbiaſſed thoughts of an honeſt and wiſe man, employed on the good of his country, may be better digeſted, than the reſults of a multitude, where faction and intereſt too often prevail: As a ſingle guide may direct the way, better than five hundred who

who *have contrary views*, or *look aſquint*, or *ſhut their eyes*.

I SHALL mention but one more particular, which I think a parliament ought to take under conſideration: Whether it be not a ſhame to our country, and a ſcandal to Chriſtianity, that, in many towns where there is a prodigious increaſe in the number of houſes and inhabitants, ſo little care ſhould be taken for the building of churches, that five parts in ſix of the people are abſolutely hindered from hearing divine ſervice? particularly here in † London, where a ſingle miniſter, with one or two ſorry

† This paragraph is known to have given the firſt hint to certain Biſhops, particularly to that moſt excellent prelate, Biſhop Atterbury, in the Earl of Oxford's miniſtry, to procure a fund for building fifty new churches in London.

ſorry curates, has the care ſometimes of above twenty thouſand ſouls incumbent on him. A neglect of religion ſo ignominious in my opinion, that it can hardly be equalled in any civilized age or country.

But, to leave theſe airy imaginations of introducing new laws for the amendment of mankind: What I principally inſiſt on, is the due execution of the old, which lieth wholly in the crown, and in the authority derived from thence: I return therefore to my former aſſertion; that if ſtations of power, truſt, profit, and honour, were conſtantly made the rewards of virtue and piety; ſuch an adminiſtration muſt needs have a mighty influence on the faith and morals of the whole kingdom: and men of great abilities would *then* endeavour

deavour to excel in the duties of a religious life, in order to qualify themſelves for publick ſervice. I may poſſibly be wrong in ſome of the means I preſcribe towards this end; but that is no material objection againſt the deſign itſelf. Let thoſe who are at the helm contrive it better, which perhaps they may eaſily do. Every body will agree, that the diſeaſe is manifeſt, as well as dangerous; that ſome remedy is neceſſary, and that none yet applied hath been effectual; which is a ſufficient excuſe for any man who wiſheth well to his country, to offer his thoughts, when he can have no other end in view but the publick good. The preſent Queen is a prince of as many and great virtues as ever filled a throne, how would it brighten her character to the preſent and

after

after ages, if ſhe would exert her utmoſt authority to inſtil ſome ſhare of thoſe virtues into her people, which they are too degenerate to learn only from her example. And, be it ſpoke with all the veneration poſſible, for ſo excellent a Sovereign; her beſt endeavours in this weighty affair, are a moſt important part of her duty, as well as of her intereſt, and her honour.

But, it muſt be confeſſed, that as things are now, every man thinketh, he hath laid in a ſufficient ſtock of merit, and may pretend to any employment, provided he hath been loud and frequent in declaring himſelf hearty for the government. It is true; he is a *man of pleaſure*, and a *free-thinker;* that is, in other words, he is a profligate in his morals, and a

deſpiſer

deſpiſer of religion; but in point of party, he is one to be *confided* in; he is an aſſertor of liberty and property; he rattleth out againſt *popery*, and *arbitrary power*, and *prieſt-craft*, and *high-church*. It is enough: He is a perſon fully qualified for any employment in the court, or the navy, the law, or the revenue; where he will be ſure to leave no arts untried of bribery, fraud, injuſtice, or oppreſſion, that he can practiſe with any hope of impunity. No wonder ſuch men are true to a government, where liberty runneth high, where property, *however attained*, is ſo well ſecured, and where the adminiſtration is at leaſt ſo gentle: It is impoſſible they could chuſe any other conſtitution, without changing to their loſs.

FIDELITY to a preſent eſtabliſhment, is indeed one principal means to defend it from a foreign enemy; but without other qualifications, will not prevent corruptions from within: And ſtates are more often ruined by theſe than the other.

To conclude: Whether the propoſals I have offered towards a reformation, be ſuch as are moſt prudent and convenient, may probably be a queſtion; but it is none at all, whether *ſome* reformation be abſolutely neceſſary; becauſe the nature of things is ſuch, that if abuſes be not remedied, they will certainly increaſe, nor ever ſtop till they end in the ſubverſion of a commonwealth. As there muſt always of neceſſity be ſome corruptions; ſo in a well inſtituted ſtate, the executive power will be

be always contending againſt them, by *reducing things* (as *Machiavel* ſpeaks) *to their firſt principles;* never letting abuſes grow inveterate, or multiply ſo far, that it will be hard to find remedies, and, perhaps, impoſſible to apply them: As he that would keep his houſe in repair, muſt attend every little breach or flaw, and ſupply it immediately, elſe time alone will bring all to ruin; how much more the common accidents of ſtorms and rain? He muſt live in perpetual danger of his houſe falling about his ears; and will find it cheaper to throw it quite down, and build it again from the ground, perhaps upon a new foundation, or at leaſt in a new form, which may neither be ſo ſafe, nor ſo convenient as the old.

FINIS.

6 M465